FILTERS | IMAGE MANIPULATION | PHOTO EDITING | PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS Free CD inside

Photoshop® creative

The magazine for Adobe® Photoshop® inspiration and advice

Inside

Photoshop expertise
Tutorials for becoming a better Photoshop user

Keeping it surreal
Skew your view of the world using surreal techniques

Shake it up!
Have fun with photos and create this snow globe

The art of Airbrushing

Rev up Photoshop's brush engine and create airbrushed Art Deco paintings

43 pages of creative tutorials inside

Improve your work

Create bespoke workspaces and enhance your creativity

Create this cover – see page 26

Creative resources

Make and share Photoshop extras such as brushes and custom shapes

Free CD-ROM!

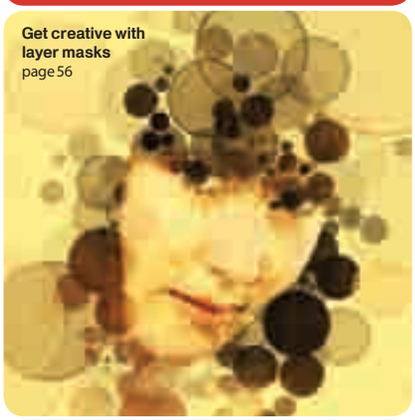
- 100+ High quality photos
- 162 Amazing brushes
- 66 Custom shapes
- 100 Patterns
- and much more

eMag

Welcome

A glimpse of what's in store this issue…

Infrared Sepia Quadtone
page 32



Get creative with layer masks
page 56

Mission Statement

Here at *Photoshop Creative*, we promise to always give you the best selection of resources to help improve your Photoshop skills. Whether it's in-depth guides to tools and techniques, or showing how to create a work of digital art, we'll make sure the information you get is accurate and informative. We want you to get the optimum Photoshop experience, and have as much fun using the program as we do putting the magazine together.

Add mist effects
page 50

Design a snow globe
page 64

There's a vast community of Photoshop users who invest a lot of time and energy in creating and sharing various tools that make your lives easier. You know the kind of things we're talking about – photos, brushes, actions, custom shapes, patterns… the list goes on and on. So this issue we thought it was about time to show you how to repay the favour. Our feature takes a look at what type of resources you can create at home, how you go about making them and then what to do with them once they're done. In no time at all your resources could be used by all sorts of people for all sorts of different things.

But if you're stuck for resource inspiration, have a sashay through our tutorials this issue. We take a spin with Photoshop's airbrush options on page 26 and discover how to create this issue's cover. There's invaluable advice for improving your photo composition on page 62, and advice for applying a great photo effect on page 32.

It's a bit difficult planning season-specific content simply because the magazine arrives in different countries at different times. But we can never ignore the draw of Christmas, so turn to page 64 and discover how to create your own snow globe – and have a mince pie or two while you're at it!

Until next time

Jo Cole **Editor**
jo.cole@imagine-publishing.co.uk

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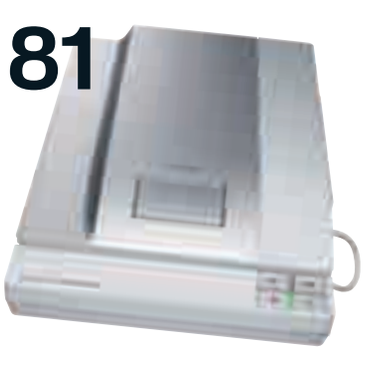

Creative hub
The latest creative news

We take a look at the best companies, products and individuals and see how they can help Photoshop

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On the CD

More free resources

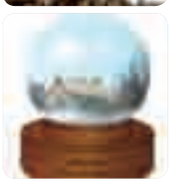
Each issue we pack our CD with juicy resources, from photos and brushes to fonts and textures

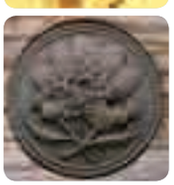
Exhibit

Reader showcase

Turn here first to see if your entry to our regular Readers' Challenge made it to print. If it didn't, enter again!

tutorials





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Learn how the rule of thirds can help turn a drab image into something far more enticing

Creative Forum

Send us your thoughts on the magazine or the Photoshop world in general, and see if other readers agree with you

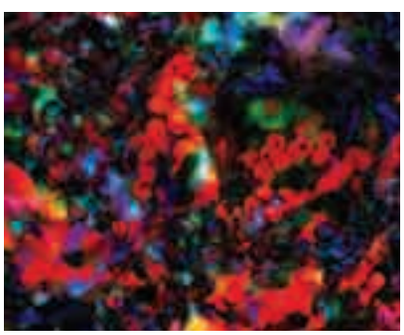
Digital experiments

I wanted to share this because the colours are so beautiful. I made this from several photos blended together, then merged the layers. I then painted on top in a separate layer, using the inspiration from the 'Paint like Cezanne' tutorial in issue 14. I set the painted layer to Color Burn blend, and then merged layers.

I duplicated the now background layer, blurred the underneath layer by using a 5px Gaussian Blur and set the top layer to Overlay, which increased the depth of field. A friend of mine from Digital Art Quirks, Kim Gabriel, suggested that I tried the 5px blur for the background layer then put a layer on top.

This is the first time I've bought your magazine – I have asked for a subscription for Christmas. I started using Photoshop Elements 3 in June and have learned so much since then. I started scrapbooking as a hobby, because I wanted to make an album from some old family photos, but I quickly realised that I couldn't manipulate paper very well (I have fibromyalgia, so my hands get tired and sore quickly) so I started to experiment with digital art. I now love playing with photos.

Judy Rapp



Judy ended up sending us two pictures, and they're both great examples of what you can do if you just try!

Thanks for your images, Judy. It's good to see you taking the techniques from the tutorials and applying them to your own images. We've become big fans of the Mezzotint filter and apply it to pretty much all our artwork!

Cut to perfection

Hello, I am very grateful to your magazine for its many, many tips, which I find very useful in my design.

I specifically found the lesson about perfect cutouts in issue 12 a big help. In the past this was a big problem for me. But now with your advice I am okay! I took a picture of this old man and used your tutorial.

If you can find a use for this image in your magazine I will be happy. It's my way of thanking you for letting me know this important information.

Victoria Payne

Once again, it's great to see how you've used past tutorials in your work, Victoria. You've managed to cut out the man's hair perfectly, so well done!

Victoria is just one reader who has found the Perfect Cutout tutorial a big help

View from the forum

User: Jo
Post: Challenge
Just to let you all know, we're bringing back the forum challenge. You'll get a month to do each one, and you'll find them in the Forum Challenge section.

User: hi-liter
Post: Forum rejig
It'd be good if we could download the Readers' Challenge images so we in America don't have to wait months for our mags to arrive.

User: Jo
Post: Forum rejig
We're working on creating a site where readers can download the mag's challenges plus other Photoshop resources.

Be on our disc!

Spammers begone

Hello, I created this image to warn against the dangers of spammers and viruses. I started with a gradient, two circles, but had no idea what the image would be. It was only after developing the circles into the main character that I decided what shape the picture would take.

The idea was that the character was annoyed and frustrated with hackers, spammers, etc, hence the type of character I created. Over time the whole thing developed into what is now the finished picture. In total there are about 16 or more separate layers.

Bill Harle

Thanks for the image, Bill. We know only too well about the problems of spammers, so appreciated your illustration very much indeed. You've got a good mix of textures in there that helps give a realistic urban feel. Well done!

TALK TO US! | EMAIL US YOUR THOUGHTS TO PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK

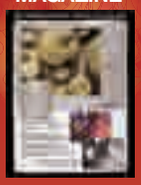
eMag

Creative hub

The latest news stories for the Photoshop community

What's hot this month

FREE PDF MAGAZINE



The latest issue of *Plugs 'n' Pixels* ezine has advice on converting to black and white using plug-ins. The next will feature ways of turning 'blah' images into works of art. **www.plugsnpixels.com**

ELEMENTS 5.0 KNOW-HOW

Adobe Photoshop Elements 5.0 Maximum Performance by Mark Galer gives you the expertise to take control of Elements and get more from the program. It has five hours of video tutorials and 200 royalty-free images. **www.markgaler.com**

NEW BRUSHES

The fantastic brush resources at 500ml **(http://brushes.500ml.org)** have been updated with a new set entitled 1920s Ladies. www.photoshopsupport.com has two exclusive new sets from 500ml.

TOP STORY

NEW PRODUCT

Forget about vague keywords – find the perfect image with Yotophoto's impressive new colour search

Colour-code image searches

Yotophoto, the search engine for free-to-use photos, has a new feature that lets users find images based on their colour composition.

The site enables visitors to search by colour in two straightforward ways: by selecting a shade from the 16-million colour picker, or entering a six-digit hexadecimal code. The latter option is designed to allow perfect integration with an existing Photoshop project, enabling users to copy and paste the colour code from the app to Yotophoto.

Searching image indexes by colour is not a new concept, with sites such as iStockphoto offering similar features, but according to the site's blog, Yotophoto uses a totally different method. The function analyses the colour histogram of every image on its database. Through this, and a complex algorithm that calculates the colours used most prominently, Yotophoto claims that its colour-searching methods provide more accuracy than other sites, which base their results on the colour average of images.

To prove the functionality of the colour search, users can click on a link to view results based on the shocking pink of the Yotophoto logo, which yields a succession of flowers, fruit and garish dresses, all predominantly featuring the same distinctive colour.

Yotophoto began life as a Wikipedia image index, but now houses over 250,000 images in its database from various popular image collections such as Flickr, Stock.xchng, Morguefile and ImageAfter. Launched in 2005, the site catalogues images based on their licence, meaning that only those containing a Creative Commons or GNU licence are indexed. Consequently, images on the site are free to use, with the sole proviso being that users don't claim the photo as their own.

The colour search function joins a range of other options that enable visitors to fine-tune their potential results. See it in action at **http://yotophoto.com/advancedsearch**, and also in the tutorial on page 36.

Yotophoto makes searching for images by colour a simple, straightforward process using a familiar colour picker

All these images are available free of charge to you, as long as you don't claim them as your own!

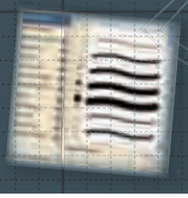
TALK TO US! | SEND NEWS STORIES TO ZOE.MUTTER@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK

Adobe Photoshop A-Z

A special series working through the best features of Photoshop

B IS FOR BRUSHES

At their simplest, brushes are the tools with which you can draw onto a canvas in Photoshop. This is just the tip of the iceberg, however, and the Brushes palette provides an array of advanced options. Photoshop comes equipped with a range of built-in brushes, but you can download more, or even create your own. Brush options aren't limited to colour and size, though, and you can set the opacity and flow (how heavy the brush appears and how long it takes to build up to maximum strength), not to mention brush blending modes, which enable you to radically alter the appearance of the brush strokes.



Photoshop eMag is go!

Enjoy a year's worth of *Photoshop Creative* on an interactive DVD

We get a lot of requests on the magazine, but by far the most popular is how people can get hold of sold out issues of the magazine.

So far the only way has been to hope that someone returns a copy or that they get posted on eBay, but now we have a better option – the *Photoshop Creative* eMag!

Get 12 issues of your favourite mag on one disc!

This interactive DVD holds 12 issues of the magazine, including tutorial files. But it is no mere digital version of the magazine. It also has advanced search options, allowing you to browse through each issue page by page, or search the entire collection for types of articles. For example, if you wanted all the Focus On guides, you would select that option for them all to be displayed!

You can also search according to keyword. Let's say you wanted to search for the Pen tool. Simply type it in to see a list of articles the tool is mentioned in. Each result has a direct link to that article, so all you have to do is click the link to read the information!

The eMag costs just £19.99 and can be ordered by emailing **pcrsubs@cisubs.co.uk**, phoning +44 (0)870 428 8354 or by filling out the special form on page 37.

FREE TEXTURES

Feel the texture

Get your hands on a multitude of high-resolution images for free at Texture King

Finding high-quality textures for Photoshop projects can be a nightmare, but thankfully help is on hand at Texture King. The site boasts a collection of over 250 textures, all of which are completely royalty-free and available to download without the hassle of membership.

Split into various sections such as concrete, metals and paint, each texture can be downloaded as a high-resolution 300ppi JPEG, ensuring that the images on hand here should be more than large enough for most design projects.

At the moment, the resources on Texture King, which have been downloaded more than 50,000 times to date, are all created by the team behind the site. However, plans are afoot to allow visitors to upload their own textures.

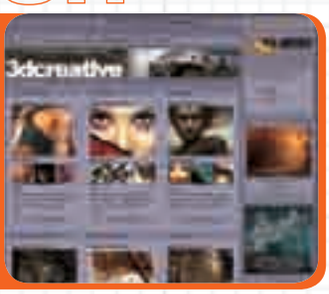
You can pick up the range of textures by going to **www.textureking.com**.

Texture King has a collection of more than 250 free textures

EXPOSURE

Get your work seen

GFXARTIST.COM
www.gfxartist.com
Containing over 35,000 images ranging from 3D models to design and photo manipulation, this site boasts some 47,000 members, which is a hell of a potential audience for your projects. Free to join, and very easy to navigate, this is a great place for those who task Photoshop with a multitude of uses.



EYEFETCH.COM
www.eyefetch.com
EyeFetch plays host to over 5,000 members, who range from impressive photographers to Photoshop image manipulators. Regular contests ensure users have something to aim for and, although the site's navigation could do with a little tweaking, there are plenty of images to keep you coming back again and again.

Updates... THIS MONTH IN SHORT

New additions to the world of Photoshop

B/W Styler

Fresh from the Plugin Site, B/W Styler promises to re-create lifelike black-and-white photography in Photoshop thanks to a series of advanced presets. The plug-in also enables you to create stunning colourising effects. You can purchase B/W styler from **www.thepluginsite.com** for $49.95.

EZ Mask 1.0

EZ Mask from Digital Film Tools takes the strain out of extracting elements from their background. Using an impressive method of masking involving estimating the transparency of pixels, EZ Mask requires less effort to achieve perfect cutouts, even on fine hair and fur. Available for $150 from **www.digitalfilmtools.com**.

ALERT! | DON'T FORGET TO ENTER OUR READERS' CHALLENGE – SEE PAGE 98

Make a date

At a loose end? Here are the must-see events coming your way

NOV 2, DEC 3-4
PHOTOSHOP CS2 POWER TOUR
Fronted by Scott Kelby, these one-day seminars promise to turn you into a Photoshop dynamo by showing how to achieve the effects used by the industry pros. **www.photoshopseminars.com**

NOV 7 – FEB 1
COLOR WITHOUT LIMITS
Touring 20 cities in the US, this series of seminars aims to demonstrate the art of colour management for users of QuarkXPress and Creative Suite 2. Find out more at **www.colorwithoutlimits.com**.

JAN 8 – FEB 14
CREATIVE SUITE 2 SEMINARS
Tips and secrets on using CS2 from world-renowned Photoshop experts, as well as advice on increasing productivity and effectiveness using the other programs in the suite. **www.creativeprofessional.org**

Two of the best… FREE BRUSH SITES

Angelic Trust

http://angelic-trust.net/nisshi/

The home of Shiricki, who fashions beautiful artwork and brushes. You can pick up 60 free brushes here, but as a member of her site ($10 a month) you can access 200 sets. If you email her with your artwork on 'cold blue winter' before Christmas, you can win free membership, plus five brush sets.

PS Brushes

www.psbrushes.net

PS Brushes proudly claims to be the largest Photoshop brush resource on the internet, and we're inclined to agree. Although it was only launched a matter of weeks ago, PS Brushes already lists a cool 235 brush sets for you to download, all for absolutely nothing. Bookmark this site now, as new brushes are being added all the time.

BACKUP SERVICE

Photographic first aid

Backing up image collections used to be a pain, but not any more thanks to ProtectMyPhotos

What would you do if your hard drive suddenly gave up the ghost? A new online service aims to provide valuable protection by backing up your images to an online server for you to retrieve as needed.

ProtectMyPhotos offers the chance to back up a host of different image and movie types, with a generous 25GB limit per user. The site offers a free service, although this is limited to low-res JPEGs. Full access, with no file restrictions, costs $39.95 a year.

Protecting your images is designed to be as simple as possible. Install the software once you've signed up (Windows-only at the moment), tell it which folders to watch, and every time you save an image there, it will automatically be uploaded to your ProtectMyPhotos backup space.

One of ProtectMyPhotos' major pluses is that it functions like a cross between an online hard drive and an image library. Once files are uploaded, you can view them at any time, in a format that mimics the Windows OS to make the process very straightforward.

The service could be particularly useful to Photoshop users, because multiple versions of the same file can be saved. Not only does this protect projects from hard drive disaster, it helps avoid accidentally overwriting a good version with a failed experiment. Users can also install the software on as many computers as they like, allowing the entire family to back up images to one account.

Protect your valuable images with ProtectMyPhotos

More at **www.protectmyphotos.com**.

PIXELPERFECT CHANNEL

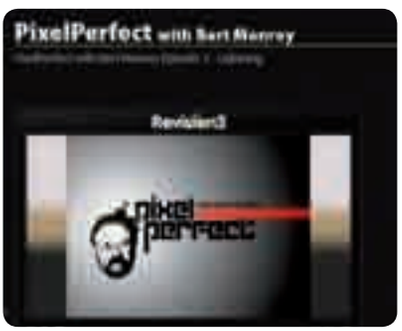
Photoshop podcasts

Pick up valuable imaging lessons at PixelPerfect

An internet TV network has begun a series of Photoshop podcasts presented by renowned digital artist Bert Monroy. Housed on Revision3's new PixelPerfect channel, they aim to showcase Monroy's vast Photoshop experience and show visitors how to achieve professional results quickly using the software.

The PixelPerfect channel, part of Revision3's fast-growing output, features extensive clips of Monroy demonstrating advanced techniques on his Wacom tablet. Monroy is a well-known Photoshop expert and author, with books such as *Commercial Photoshop* and *Photoshop Studio* to his name.

When we went to press, two podcasts were available in QuickTime, WMV and Xvid formats: 'Using Photoshop in fantasy art', which contains guides on creating lightning and a vortex, and 'Patterns and animations', dealing with creating basic animations. Each video clip is around 15 minutes long.



Renowned author Bert Monroy is a host at PixelPerfect

More at **http://revision3.com/pixelperfect**.

The team's wish list

Pure material delight…

FUJIFILM FINEPIX F31FD

This fine camera boasts a 6.3-megapixel rating, 3.0x optical zoom, a range of manual options and extended battery life, all of which make it a pretty decent snapper for only $399. But this is just half the story…

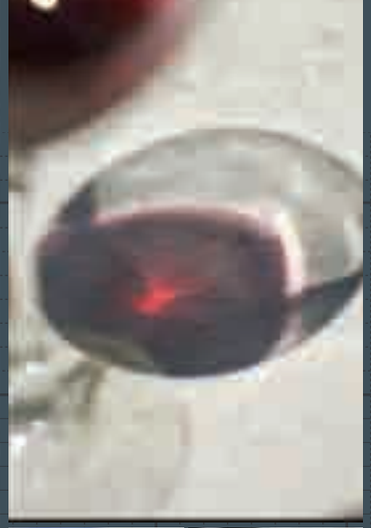
WE WANT IT BECAUSE…

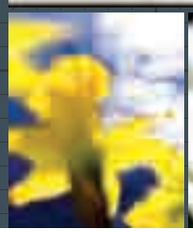
The F31fd is the first compact camera to contain Fujifilm's impressive Face Detection technology, a process that identifies any human faces in the frame and then gets busy calculating the best focus and exposure settings based on what it sees. Looks like the days of binning half of your portrait shots could be gone then…

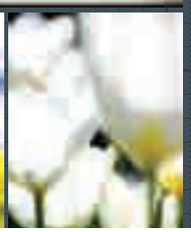
All images courtesy of Katrin Eismann

THE STORY BEHIND...

Katrin Eismann







We asked Katrin Eismann – well known lecturer in photography and Photoshop, and author of many educational guides on the subject – to share a few tricks of the trade with us…

Katrin's top five tips for restoring and retouching photographs

- When working on many images, enhance the easiest ones first. By working with simpler ones, you'll learn what needs to be done and in what order.
- Tear out images, words, adverts and articles of interest in mags and keep them. They can produce a wealth of ideas.
- Learn to look at images and imagine them in Photoshop.
- Be a mentor – teaching and presenting a technique or process is the best way to learn it.
- Don't bother to learn what every slider or setting does. Focus on your projects.

Katrin has contributed to numerous magazines, and her impressive digital pieces have appeared in many books – inspiring artists, lecturers and professional photographers. Her lectures and seminars always feature the latest cutting edge technology and advances in photography and imaging software. Her written and DVD guides are thorough, engaging and vital resources for anyone who has an urge to push their digital imaging and photographic skills to the limit. If you want to know anything about Photoshop's tools and techniques, Katrin Eismann has the necessary knowledge…

What creative projects are you working on at the moment?

I am working on a book and a new Masters degree program. I enjoy looking at standard formats such as a book or curriculum, and seeing what I can create that is new and exciting. The program is for professional photographers and photographic educators who, in one intensive year, need to become fully versed in digital photography tools, technology and techniques.

You've updated your book *Photoshop Restoration and Retouching*. What additions have you made?

When updating books I feel it's important to add true value for existing readers. Asking people who have read a previous version of a book to buy a new version is something I take seriously. When updating the Retouching book, I reviewed every page, replaced 85 per cent of the images and added more advanced examples. I added information on new features in Photoshop CS2 including Smart Objects, Vanishing Point, Warp, and new filters including Lens Correction, Smart Sharpen and Noise Reduction. In the Glamour chapter I revealed the secrets of top retouchers who have retouched the hottest Hollywood celebrities and worked on high-end cosmetic ads.

What subject do you think your next book is going to focus on?

My next book is *The Creative Digital Darkroom*. It uses a tutorial approach that translates traditional photographic and darkroom skills and concepts into contemporary digital solutions using Photoshop and Lightroom. This book focuses on the most important tools and techniques used to create effective images that express the photographer's vision.

You've also released a fine selection of training DVDs. How did you learn Photoshop and which medium – books, lectures or DVDs – do you think is most successful?

People learn in different ways. I learn the most when I am in love with a project. I also learn techniques by teaching, and love seeing how students take my ideas and run with them. In fact, the questions that students and readers ask push me to think of new solutions.

Are there any other artists, traditional or digital, that you find inspiring?

I enjoy going to galleries and museums, and even walking through NYC and looking at advertising images. How people portray themselves and see their world is fascinating to me. We're surrounded by images – from movies to websites, newspapers and magazines. It's important to really look at them and not take them for granted.

What's your favourite Photoshop tool for enhancing photographs and why?

If I had to choose one feature it would be Adjustment Layers. I love how flexible they are and how they can be used for production and creative purposes. They are resolution-independent as well as non-destructive.

Which area of photography do you enjoy taking and manipulating in Photoshop?

Photography allows me to discover new points of view and explore the world. I see the world more clearly through a viewfinder and I enjoy working with camera RAW images and Lightroom.

You're a respected lecturer in photo-manipulation and Photoshop. What lectures or seminars are coming up?

I'll be speaking at PhotoPlusExpo in NYC in November, PMA in Las Vegas in March 2007, and Photoshop World in April 2007.

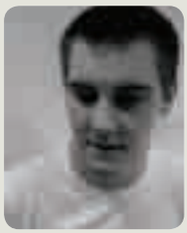
Katrin is a master at innovative photographic composites

WEB | FIND OUT MORE ABOUT KATRIN'S WORK AT **WWW.PHOTOSHOPDIVA.COM**

Reader's profile

He may be a newcomer to Photoshop, but that hasn't stopped John making his mark on poster design. Discover more about his work below...

John Latham



One of the best things about Photoshop is the fact that you can get creative with your interests. For this issue's Readers' Profile, we focus on a person who has combined his love of music and art to produce some really great posters. If you'd like to find out more about John's work, pay a visit to his site at **www.monkeyseemonkeydesign.com** or email **johns2bs@aol.com**.

When did you start using Photoshop?
I started using Photoshop earlier this year because art and gig posters have always caught my eye, and I thought it was time to learn more about how these things are actually made on-screen and what type of work goes into them.

Have you always been interested in design?
I wanted to take one of two paths – art and design, or music. I took music on for a while as it's been my main interest, but now I'm just so glad that I've finally found something that uses both of what I really like.

How do you start designing a poster?
First I try to get a rough idea about where each part of the poster will be. The best thing to do at this point is to start getting things on the page. Have a play around – move the text – twist it, turn it and build on the things you have. I won't always put text down first though; sometimes it'll be a background and then I'll simply get an idea of what's going to be the main attraction of that particular poster. Each poster needs to have something unique on it. Even though a gig poster is about the bands, it still needs to have something that people can relate to, such as 'the one with the body and the information on the T-shirt' – the Detroit Cobras poster.

What's your favourite piece of work that you've done?
My favourite piece of work is A Static Lullaby poster for State Media. It's one of a kind! I've mixed modern themes and shapes with vintage colours and impact – on top of this using an obvious perspective. Most of my recent posters have been for State Media and

I love working for them because I'm always faced with a new challenge.

Is there a Photoshop technique you would like to try?
Using vast pattern overlays inside shapes is something I've tried but I haven't done too much of it, and I'd really like to learn more about that.

Make yourself known!

If you would like to be featured in these pages, send us an email to **pcr@imagine-publishing.co.uk** with a few lines about who you are and what sort of Photoshop work you do.

IMAGE BREAKDOWN

Detroit Cobras – the background story

Here John explains how he created the vintage paper look for the background of the Detroit Cobras poster. "Hue/Saturation is an amazing tool", he says, "and it does a good job for the start of a colour change."

01 Preliminary layers I very quickly made two layers; one was a blue-to-white gradient and the other a spikey shape with a white-to-green gradient.

02 Colour change
I then flattened both layers and selected Hue/Saturation. This is an amazing tool and it does a good job for the start of a colour change. Set the Hue to -45 and the Saturation to about +8.

NOTES | DON'T BE SHY, GET IN TOUCH AND REVEAL A BIT ABOUT YOUR WORKING PRACTICES TO OTHER READERS

A Static Lullaby (opposite page)

"When I started this poster I knew I wanted to create a surface, something that was lying on its back and small objects could pass through it."

Detroit Cobras (above)

"Many people have emailed me about this poster asking where they can find the font for the band name and date I used – it's a secret! Yellow grass and green sky? Yes, but if you look closely you'll see it's not just a man in a field."

MSMDSKY (left)

"I worked and worked on this for so long, had it different ways, different colours and was adding to it all the time. The outcome was good, so now I use it as my MySpace picture."

MSMD001 (below)

"This was the first poster I did for my own use and print for Monkeysee Monkeydesign. It's the first thing I started to work on quite a bit, before all my gig posters came along."

03 Shadow play This gave the image a dusty worn-out feel, but it still needed a bit of colour. I next used the Color Balance on the shadows, +14, -24, +9. This just boosted the lower tones a little.

04 Brightness and contrast I then took the brightness down to -10 and the contrast up to +7. This was just to balance out the saturation. These are only small changes, but once all the other information is on the poster, plus some black images, you can really tell the difference.

05 Now add paper And finally, I applied layers of paper with the opacity right down to make it look like part of the background.

Create your own resources

There's a world of resources for Photoshop users, building a community of sharing and creativity. Find out how to create your own and then share them with others

Imagine a pebble being dropped into water – it will cause lots of ripples to expand outwards from the point where it was dropped. In our world of dodgy analogies, this pebble is Photoshop and the ripples are all the extras that help make it such a powerful image-editing program. We're talking brushes, photos, custom shapes, textures… the list goes on and on. Each one offers new creative potential and more often than not will be exactly what you need for a particular project.

Photoshop comes with a pretty decent stack of these resources straight out of the box, but the time will inevitably come when you need more. For most, a trip online and a quick search for 'Photoshop brushes' or 'Photoshop shapes' can sort this. There's a plethora of sites heaving with all sorts of content that will fit whatever style you're working in – mostly uploaded by Photoshop enthusiasts who simply want to share their love of creating things with other Photoshop fans.

But instead of downloading someone else's hard work, why not create them yourself? It's an exercise that serves two purposes. First, you get the exact resource you need. Maybe you're fed up with constantly applying the same duotone settings to photos. If you record your settings and make an action from them, you only have to apply that to any photos in the future. They may just be tiny files, but resources can play a pivotal role in your artistic endeavours.

Then there's the sense of community spirit. Although a lot of professional Photoshop artists use the program as a way of generating income, far more users just have fun creating effects in Photoshop. They love experimenting with the creative possibilities the program affords, and want to talk to others who feel the same. Which is why there are so many Photoshop forums and sites online – it's a way for like-minded people to talk to each other, swap ideas… generally help enhance an already thriving community. One thing that really

stands out about Photoshop users is just how willing they are to share stuff they've made, so it's only fair to do the same – after all, you wouldn't turn up at a party without bringing some drink, would you?!

Getting resourceful

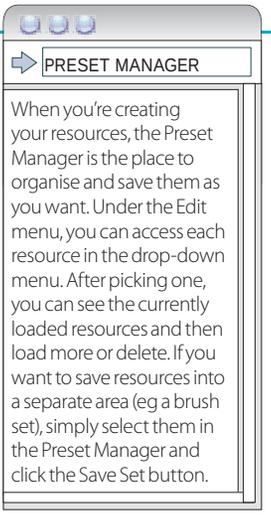
The driving force behind this feature is to show exactly what resources an ordinary home user can create. You'll find walkthroughs on pages 18, 20 and 21 for step-by-step instructions on creating the most popular resources, but we'll look at all the resources you can make and investigate how they can help your creativity. We'll only focus on the easily attainable – explaining how to create fonts and filters would take too much room and needs its own tutorial. In the final section we'll look at what you can do with your new collection of resources and how you can share them. One thing that's struck us with the Readers' Challenge is how we always get new ideas from your entries. If you've been using a brush in a certain way and then someone uses that brush in a totally different way, it inspires you to try something new. And if sharing your resources kick-starts the old imagination – well, that can only be a good thing!

> "One thing that really stands out about Photoshop users is just how willing they are to share stuff they've made"

Photography fun

In our opinion, photos are the most helpful resources you can ever hope to meet. We're obviously not going to give you instructions on creating a photo, but we definitely thought it was worthwhile explaining exactly why your camera is a powerful resource-generating tool.

First, you can use photos as a starting point for creating other resources. A lot of people will turn a photo or part of a photo into a brush; they are great for converting into a custom shape;


PRESET MANAGER
When you're creating your resources, the Preset Manager is the place to organise and save them as you want. Under the Edit menu, you can access each resource in the drop-down menu. After picking one, you can see the currently loaded resources and then load more or delete. If you want to save resources into a separate area (eg a brush set), simply select them in the Preset Manager and click the Save Set button.

they make fabulous pattern generators and you can also photograph objects such as stones for realistic textures.

But they also serve as a first-class reference resource. When out looking for inspiration, a lot of artists now use a digital camera where once they may have used a sketchbook. Instead of desperately trying to sketch out details such as an object's shape, they simply take a photo, print it out at home and use that to construct a painting. Just because you're using a computer instead of paints and easels doesn't mean you can't do the same.

You can also construct new scenes from lots of photos. We did exactly this in issue 12 with our Japanese woodprint tutorial. Crude selections from photos of trees, mountains, rocks and the sea were put together to create a Japanese landscape and then Photoshop's tools were used to make them look like a coherent whole. Photos not only allow you to create realistic images from separate parts, they enable someone who can't draw to trace shapes and get the look they want.

*Above: The 44 SUBURBIA site (**http://44suburbia.org**) is a fine brush resource*

Although it's possible to make money from photos, there are an amazing number of people and companies that offer free photos. The king of low-cost photography, iStockphoto has a free photo each week that you can download. But for sheer numbers of free photos, **http://sxc.hu** can't be beat. We are regular visitors to the site because it has thousands of members who have uploaded photos of all sorts of things. It's free to register, and once you're signed in, do a search and enjoy the results. Some photos have restrictions, but for home users the sky is pretty much the limit.

For a real community feel, head for **www.flickr.com**. This site is a great place for people to upload photos they're proud of. It isn't a place for pro photographers to show their perfect images off – it's a place for ordinary people to come and share what they've done, get feedback and make some friends along the way.

To get a good overview of all the free photo sites, pop over to **www.photoshopsupport.com/resources/stock-photos.html**. Here you'll find a delicious list of sites that promise a treasure of free photos. But for more targeted searches for free photos, load up **www.yotophoto.com**. This is an excellent search engine of free photo sites that's very easy to use.

> "Brushes are very useful if you can't draw. You can take a photograph of a tree, for example, and use this to create tree shapes in a document – simply add the colour and detail"

A brush with greatness

Next to photos, brushes are a wonderful creative resource. They are highly adaptable and can cope with a variety of artistic tasks. For example, you can create a frame brush and then use it to add a digital border to your images. If you're creating a digital collage, why not create a brush from one of the images being used and then use it to fashion some interesting background effects?

Making custom shapes

Custom shapes are a bit of a weird Photoshop resource in that most people tend to overlook them, or if they do know they exist, they don't think about how they can be used creatively. The fact is they are very powerful, especially if you can create your own. They are an excellent way of creating quick illustrations and are a boon if you don't feel confident about your drawing ability, and the fact that you can resize the shapes without losing image quality makes them very flexible indeed.

The good news is that they are very easy to create, and follow a similar method to brushes. Have a look at our walkthrough to the right and see how we turned our lovely penguin shot into a useful custom shape. The file is on the disc, so load it up and have a go yourself.

01 Open your guide image We will be creating a custom shape based on a photograph of a penguin. Begin by opening the image from the disc.

02 Carefully make an outline selection Choose the Magnetic Lasso tool and go around the outline of the penguin. Move around the edge slowly for a more accurate selection.

Above: The Preset Manager is where you can organise, load and save your Photoshop resources

Brushes are also very useful if you can't draw. You can take a photo of a tree, for example, and use this to create tree shapes in a document. Now the form is there, simply go in and add the colour and detail.

Creating brushes is simple. You can either create a source mark in Photoshop, scan in something like a pencil scribble or open a photo. It's then a case of defining the source for the brush footprint and saving it. You can create one at a time, or create a set made up of lots of brushes of a similar theme. See the walkthrough on page 20 for how to create a brush.

Brush creation is a popular pastime, so it's no surprise the net is teeming with free brushes. Any site worth its salt will state which version of Photoshop the brushes will work with, and whether they are compatible with Elements. A lot of people will also have visual guides, making it easy to download the most useful brushes.

There are a few free brush directories, such as **http://resources.the-protagonist.com/index.php?action=displaycat&catid=39**. The owner has listed the types of brushes you can find, making locating them far easier. Another spectacular guide is **www.bluevertigo.com/ar**. In addition to listing nearly 100 brush providers, it also points you to other Photoshop resources on the web, so make sure you visit it.

For help with making brushes, check out: **www.mccannas.com/pshop2/tip16.htm**, **www.tutorialized.com/tutorial/Creating-Custom-Brushes/16318** and **www.obsidiandawn.com/brushes/tutorials/creating/index.htm**.

New customs

What if we were to tell you Photoshop has vector capabilities? Well, it has – and it's all thanks to custom shapes. These little beauties can be found in the toolbar, under the Text tool. In addition to the rectangular, circular and line options, there's a custom option, whose icon looks a little like a gingerbread man. Select this and you can access Photoshop's library of shapes, which provides things such as

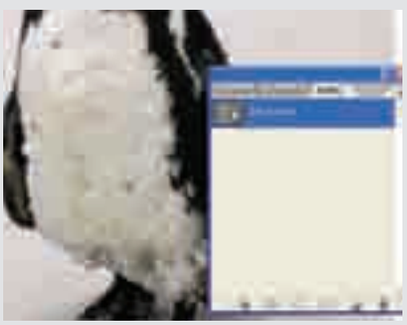
CASE STUDY

Ningengirai.net

Ningengirai is a great example of what creating resources is all about. As she explains, "I quickly noticed that people offered resources for others to use – sometimes for free, sometimes at rather horrendous prices. It was a simple case of 'I want to know 'how' it's done, and if I can reproduce it'. Reproducing worked just fine, and after a while I started coming up with my own ideas.

"I do this strictly as a hobby, and after showing my work to a couple of people and also discovering that there's a lively resource-maker scene on the internet, I decided to offer my resources for others to download for free. I never really thought about selling any of my resources. It's my hobby, my time to have fun, and I'd hate to have that ruined by having to think about deadlines or 'demand,"

You can find some of Ningengirai's resources on this issue's disc, in the feature folder. To see all of her stuff, visit **www.ningengirai.net**



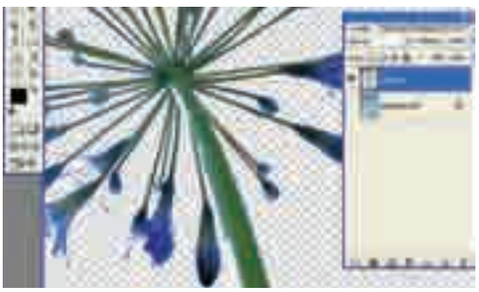
03 From selection to path To create a path from your lasso selection choose Window>Paths. Now click on the Make Work Path From Selection icon at the bottom of the window. Your path will appear in the Paths window.

04 Get into shape Now choose Edit>Define Custom Shape and enter a name into the Shape Name window. Choose the Custom Shape tool, click on the arrow beside the Shape title in the Options bar and your shape swatch will appear at the bottom.

05 Locating your custom shape You can use your custom shape in different ways by selecting from the Options bar. Select from Shape Layers, Paths or Fill Pixels. There are other ways you can customise it depending on which option you select.

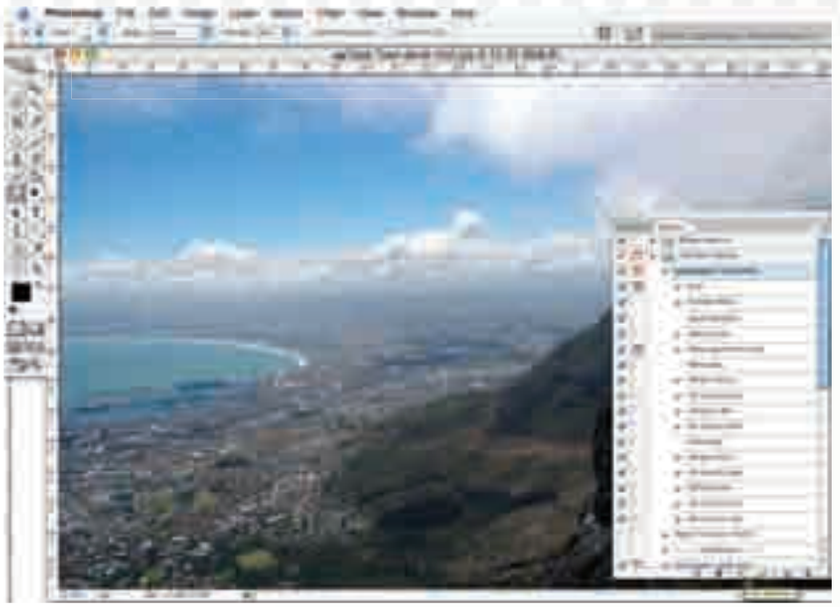
Making brushes

01 **What do you want to make into a brush?** Open the image supplied on the disc, or whatever image you want to make into a brush. It helps if your image is on a white background, because all white background areas are shown as transparent in the brush.



02 **Separate it from the background** The flower we are going to use is on a blue sky instead of a white background. We selected it from the sky background and copied and pasted it onto a new layer. Turn the visibility of the bottom layer off.

03 **Name and use your brush** With this new layer active go to Edit>Define Brush Preset. Name your brush. To paint with it, choose the Brush tool. In the Brushes window click the Brush Presets tab. Scroll down to the bottom where the brush will appear.



Above: Actions are a fantastic way of quickly applying the same effect to any image you open up. Simply record your movements, name it and save it, then play it from the Actions palette

borders, symbols, birds and arrows. These are vector shapes, so you can fiddle with their size without worrying about losing image quality. You can fill shapes with colour or have them as a path outline, although Elements users only have the first option. As with brushes, custom shapes let you achieve outlines you might never be able to draw, and once set up, they're a quick way of building up an illustration. Fans of the vector style of illustration – flat, bright colours – will find custom shapes are their new best friend.

Action hero

One under-used and underrated resource is the humble action. Maybe it's because actions are swathed in mystery that they don't make it into more people's workflow, but they are great timesavers. In case you've never heard of them, actions record a series of, erm actions, then store them to be applied to other images. Theoretically they can be applied to any creative task, but they work best on photo-editing tasks. Let's say you want to resize a series of photos and then convert to black and white. Open the Actions palette, set it to Record, then perform the task on one of the photos. Stop recording the action and save. Now open up another photo, play your new action and relax as Photoshop repeats your movements. They really are incredibly handy and are used by a lot of our freelancers. Unfortunately they aren't available in Photoshop Elements.

> "Maybe it's because actions are swathed in mystery that they don't make it into more people's workflow, but they are great timesavers"

Many sites offer free actions. Try **www.atncentral.com/download.htm** for a vast range covering a multitude of effects. Al Ward has juicy free actions at **www.actionfx.com**, with a choice of type effects and one that'll turn a photo into a pencil sketch.

Turn to page 18 to see how to make a custom shape – despite their flexibility they are very easy to create. There are some excellent sites for free shapes. Try Graphicxtras at **www.graphicxtras.com**. Besides loads of shapes for Photoshop, you'll also find free brushes and gradients. The Biorust site, **www.biorust.com/downloads/browse/4/added/desc/1/**, is a haven for shape fans, with links to loads of creators and a handy sample image of what the shapes look like. Also check out **www.myjanee.com/tuts/shapes6/shapes63.htm** for a tutorial on creating and using shapes.

*Above: Once you've created your resources, it's good if you can share the goodness with other people. Sites such as Biorust (**www.biorust.com**) offer a great way of getting your creations online*

The Chainstyle site at **www.chainstyle.com** also has some exceptional offerings, and is the online home of Rob Anselmi, one of our regular freelancers. Apart from fun effects, you get photo-editing actions such as ones to correct underexposure. But if you fancy creating actions, try: **www.photoshopcafe.com/tutorials/actions/actions2.htm**, **www.outdooreyes.com/photo100.php3** and **www.soniacoleman.com/Tutorials/actions2.htm**.

The little extras

So far we've focused on the big resources, but there are various smaller ones that deserve mentioning. Although they'll never be the main focus of a project, they can help add finesse.

Patterns are useful for filling in letters, creating interest in large areas of space, or for creating abstract, er, patterns. You can use them as a filling device or apply them to brush strokes. The Pattern Generator filter lets you make random patterns from photos, or you can use them as a tiled effect. See the boxout on the right.

Gradients are another unsung hero, but can be very effective. For example, most metal effects are simply the right coloured gradients. You can also use gradients to make flat-colour illustrations come to life. We showed how to do this in issue 10's Big Technique and it's a good way of applying quick shade. Find out how they're made at **www.elated.com/tutorials/graphics/photoshop/gorgeous_gradients/**.

You may find it useful to create gradients with a set purpose in mind. For example, set up a pink-to-dark-pink gradient for skin tones and make a set where the shadows are on different sides, or create various skin tones. You can make sky gradients (which can also be applied as a Color Overlay to photos to enhance skylines) and have a range of summery blues and wintry greys.

Sharing the wealth

Once you've created your resources, what do you do next? Try a place such as deviantART (**www.deviantart.com**). You can become a member for free and create your own page. Then you just upload your content – there's a healthy Photoshop resource section. It's easy to do, and is a great way of getting feedback.

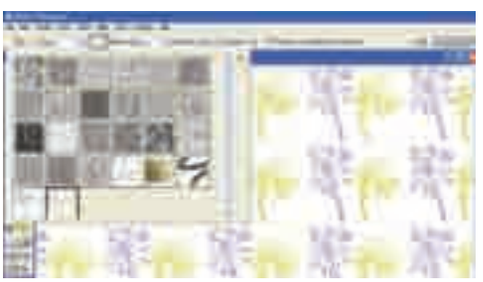
When sharing photos, three sites are a must-visit: Stock Xchng at **http://sxc.hu**, Flickr at **www.flickr.com** and Morguefile at **www.morguefile.com**. Get a web presence at these places and you'll soon be receiving emails from grateful people saying how they've used your images in their work!

We've only touched the surface of what you can do with resources, and also what you can create. But hopefully you'll begin to see how easy it is to put your personal stamp on Photoshop tools and also how you can help other Photoshop users.

Making patterns

01 **Select the area** In Photoshop create the design you want to use as a pattern (or open the one on the disc). Select the Rectangular Marquee tool and drag it around the area you want to make into your pattern. You can also drag it around a section of a photo.

02 **Pick a pattern name** Now choose Edit>Define Pattern. When the dialog box comes up, type in a name for your pattern.



03 **Putting it into practice** You can apply your pattern when using the Paint Bucket, Pattern Stamp, Healing Brush and Patch tools and also in the Layer Style dialog . For example, when using the Paint Bucket, pick Pattern in the first pull-down in the Options bar. Click the next arrow and choose your pattern from the swatches.

Find and share resources

With so many great resource sites on the internet, we thought we'd end the feature with a round-up of our favourites:

Free photos

morgueFile
www.morguefile.com
An excellent selection of different photos covering all sorts of topics. You don't even have to sign up!

Image*After
www.imageafter.com
A fabulous collection of photos that are free for personal and commercial use

Stock.xchng
www.sxc.hu
This is an invaluable resource for finding high quality photos of pretty much anything you can think of

PhotoFreeway.com
www.photofreeway.com
A good place to come and upload your photos. Create public or private albums and wait for the compliments!

Free brushes

Dubtastic
www.dubtastic.com
A fantastic range of grunge brushes that will rough up your artwork and make a lovely textured mess

Photoshop Brushes
www.photoshopbrushes.com/brushes.htm
A phenomenal amount of different brushes that cover a wide range of subjects. From butterflies to barcodes, they are all here

44 SUBURBIA
http://44suburbia.org
A good-looking website takes you through to some very good-looking brushes for Photoshop 7 and above

Biorust
http://biorust.com/index.php?page=downloads_section&catid=3
Loads of resources can be found here, so register and start uploading your own!

Free custom shapes

Free Logo Makers
www.thefreelogomakers.com/pshop_styles/default.asp
Not only can you access free shapes, but there are also lots of other effects and styles available for free download

GraphicXtras
www.graphicxtras.com
This is possibly the best place to come for free custom shapes. In addition to plenty of free offerings, you can also purchase bumper crops

Free actions

The Lights Right
www.thelightsright
A phenomenal selection of photographic actions that will have you achieving fabulous results. If you like an action, be nice and buy one of the prints!

PanosFX
www.panosfx.com
For effects, this site is hard to beat. All sorts of actions can be found here, from making a photo look like it's on a TV to creating marble text

Free extras

Timo2000.de vol. 4.zero
www.timo2000.de/frameset_us.htm
Lots of extra resources here, from gradients and layer styles to actions and plug-ins. Can be a bit difficult to navigate, but once you get the hang of it the pickings are good

Photoshopsupport.com
www.photoshopsupport.com
An excellent site for tutorials in addition to links for other resources such as brushes, actions and more

Chainstyle
www.chainstyle.com
Lots of gradients, actions, layer styles and patterns can be found here, as well as a fine collection of tutorials

Be on our CD!

Now you know the kind of resources you can create, here's another way to share them with others. We're going to introduce a readers' resource section on the CD that comes with each issue, giving you a chance to share your creations. We don't mind what resource it is – send details to **pcr@imagine-publishing.co.uk** or head for our forum and tell us about your creations. Visit **www.pshopcreative.co.uk/forum** and go to the Readers' Resources section.

tutorials

More fabulous tutorials to make you glad to be a Photoshop user! Whether it's image editing or digital art creation, there's something to tickle your fancy

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Big technique

Photoshop workspaces 46

You can make various tweaks and alterations to Photoshop's workspaces and enjoy a smoother work environment

Focus on...

We continue to work our way through the inbuilt tools of the Photoshop software and reveal how they can be used to create better artwork

Displace filter 54
Rule of thirds 62

Cool plug-ins

Blow Up plug-in 72

There is an unwritten law in the world of creativity that states the one picture that's perfect for your needs will be too small to use. This plug-in aims to help by increasing the size of images without damaging their quality

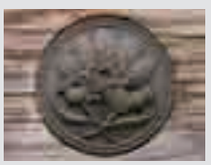
Tutorial starts on page 26

The art of airbrushing

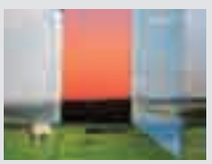
Discover how to get the look of airbrushing and create a stunning Art Deco-inspired piece

32 Get creative with quadtones

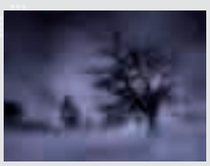
36 Colour-coded searching from Yotophoto



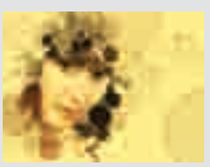
38 Manufacture your own rust



42 Compose an excitingly surreal image



50 Add atmosphere to photos with mist



56 Bombard your photos with bubbles!

64 Design your own snow globe

CHECK IT OUT! | TUTORIAL RESOURCE FILES CAN BE FOUND ON THE CD – SEE THE INSIDE BACK COVER

The art of airbrushing

Take a spin with us as we reveal how to achieve an airbrushed painting in the Art Deco style

Traditional airbrushing is a much-loved but hard to execute art form. Unlike the digital world, mistakes are almost impossible to correct and very costly.

The first use of the airbrush was in the 1890s, achieved by blowing air through a tube. It would often take days and even weeks to complete one traditional piece, which is still the case to this day.

The artist would use the airbrush itself, compressors, paint and other tools, usually starting with a line drawing. Using masking material, they would airbrush section after section. Plastic transparent self-adhesive film was placed on top of a line drawing to mask areas, followed by precise cutting of an area to airbrush through.

Photoshop's own airbrush works with a selection of brushes and Brush palette controls. The digital process is considerably simpler and mess-free. Precise cutting and masking can be achieved with great ease, and mistakes corrected as many times as necessary. The effect is soft with plenty of shading and multi-tones.

We'll recreate a classic poster painted by George Ham. The airbrush effect on the car is achieved through application of tinted colour over a low opacity black layer, just like the traditional process. We will concentrate on the car and go for a clean, smooth airbrush effect. However, the surrounding area will be a much looser style, with plenty of spray effects. If you find you prefer one look over another, apply that technique to the whole piece.

In addition to using the airbrush option, we will also use other Photoshop tools in order to get that stylised smooth look.

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
4 hours

YOUR EXPERTS
Hannah Gal and Lora Sykes

ON THE CD
Line drawing

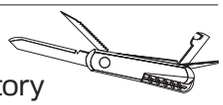
WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7.0 AND ABOVE, PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 4.0 AND ABOVE

START YOUR ENGINES, PLEASE

Brush your way to Art Deco heaven

01 Set some guidelines Open the 'line drawing.jpg' file from this issue's disc. You'll see a very rough outline of the image. Create a new layer for the painting. Now go to **www.allposters.com/-st/George-Ham-Posters_c35486_.htm** and take a grab of the poster this image is based on. Open in Photoshop and use as a reference.

Art Deco style

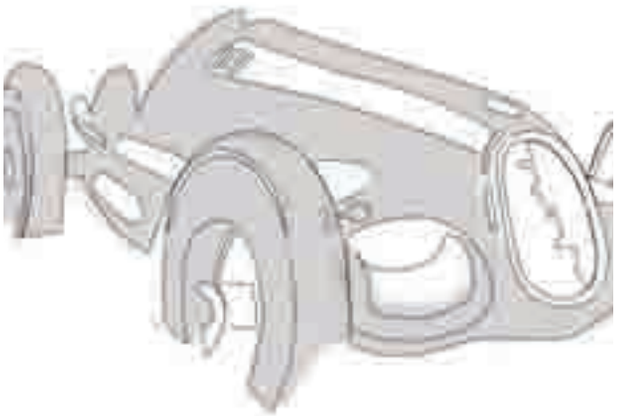


A brief lesson in art history

The inspiration for this piece came from George Ham's 1937 poster for the Monaco Grand Prix. Its subject matter perfectly captured the Art Deco's love affair with anything fast and luxurious. The posters of this time are a great place to get ideas for how to create your own, and offer wonderfully stylized views of the world. The colours are always beautifully blended and there's a feeling of excitement.

To see more of Ham's work, visit **www.allposters.com/-st/George-Ham-Posters_c35486_.htm**. You'll notice that he painted a lot of cars, especially for the Grand Prix.

Perhaps the most famous creator of these types of posters is A M Cassandre. He produced posters for various travel companies, and his Normandie poster is the most well-known. Although these artists didn't use airbrushes, the soft shading and speckly finishes that typify the style lend themselves perfectly to the airbrush medium. To see more of Cassandre's posters, go to **www.internationalposter.com**.



02 The first paint Click on the Brush tool and load the Wet Media Brushes. Select Watercolor Fat Tip. Set the mode to Normal and the opacity to 10%. Create a new layer called 'Paint' and pick a black colour. Click the Airbrush icon in the top Options bar. Cover the car with the soft black brush as shown (left).

03 Build it up The airbrush effect is created by gradually applying more and more colour. Stay with the soft Watercolor Fat Tip brush at a low 10% Opacity and go to the Options bar. Change the brush blending mode to Multiply.

04 Tinting Load your brush with red for the car and apply a tint at 10% Opacity. Now increase the opacity to 20-25% and apply an additional layer over the previous one. You will see the colour build up and intensify with each stroke and colour layer you apply. Try to cover an area in one long stroke without lifting the brush.

05 Other colours Vary the brush opacity as you progress. Observe the original artwork and start concentrating on areas that are denser in colour than others. Switch to other colours in the car such as browns and blacks and apply in the same careful way as the red.

06 More flat colour The car's pretty much sorted in terms of the first base coat, so we'll return to it later. Now turn your attention to the background area. Using the original line drawing for guidance, apply tints of low opacity exactly the same as before (Fat Watercolor brush with the Airbrush option clicked). Use the Normal blending mode.

SOFT SHADING AND SHARPER DETAIL

Mix two styles of airbrushing

07 Review your progress Observe the work so far and look out for any sharp edges. Use a small Watercolor Fat Tip brush to smooth out any sharp lines. Sample the colour of the area you wish to smooth out, set an opacity level of 20-30 and apply strokes over the sharp lines.

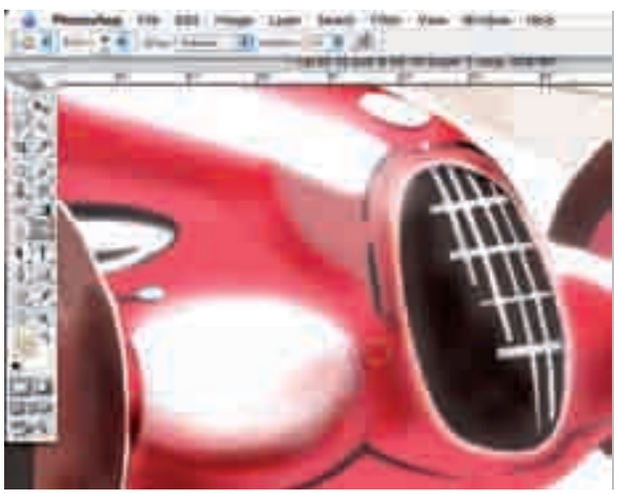
08 Going for depth Now that most detail is in place, you can concentrate on specific areas. Use the Watercolor Heavy Pigments brush to add depth to different parts of the image. For example, apply repeated strokes to add darker shades of brown to the car wheels and area around the white grid in front of the car.

09 Another review Continue to apply darker paint to areas on the image. These are still very loose, because we will add the detail soon. You can also change things at this stage – we used a different colour blue for the sky and sea. Just remember to use low opacity and apply lots of coats.

10 Fill up the trunk Load the Natural Brushes set and pick Stipple 54. Increase its size to 120px. Create a new layer, choose a dark brown and paint in the tree trunk. Pick a darker brown and apply along the outside edge, then select a light brown and paint down the middle.

11 Blurred vision Still on the Trunk layer, go to Filter>Blur>Surface Blur and apply the settings as above. If you haven't got Surface Blur, Gaussian will do the trick. The aim is to merge the different browns applied in the previous step.

12 Flatten the image Now the basic colours are applied, flatten the image. Pick the Eraser tool, load the Basic Brush set and choose a soft mechanical brush. Change its opacity to 70% and start applying to the edges of your existing highlighted areas. The aim is to soften the edges.



13 Burn rubber Pick the Burn tool. Keep the soft brush and set Range to Midtones. The Exposure setting affects how dark you want the brush, which needs to be adjusted as and when you need. We started with it set at 19% to start adding shadows around the bumper. Once you've got the hang of it, add shadows of various levels to the rest of the car.

14 Spray brush So far we've kept a smooth look to the image, but most airbrushed paintings have distinctive spray effects. The easiest way to achieve this is by creating a special spray brush, using Photoshop's Spatter brush as a starting point. See the box over the page for how to create one.

Tip

The boats

The original poster we based this tutorial on had small boats in the background. To achieve these, create a new layer and set a white, small Watercolor brush at 40-50% Opacity to draw several boats as in the original. Draw one white stroke over another to achieve the right level of boat brightness. Copy and paste this boat layer several times to quickly get more. Use the Transform tool to vary the size of the new copies and place around the image.

Alert!

Save your new brush

When you create the spray brush, it's temporarily saved in the Natural Brushes set. As soon as you move to another brush set, though, it can be erased. If you don't want to save the brush permanently, when you load a new brush set click Append instead of Replace. This way you can access other sets and not lose your spray brush!

Pimp your ride

Take a visit to the respray shop

Although there is a lot of fiddling in this tutorial, there are only three main tools, with two options of finish. These tools are the Eraser, the Dodge tool and the Burn tool. Here's a look at how we build up the airbrush effect.

The Eraser is used to soften the harsh lines between colour and highlight areas (white). When used with a soft mechanical brush (1), it gives a smooth transition between the two, almost giving a hazy effect. When used with the spray brush we created, though (2), it gives more of a speckled look, allowing both the colour and highlight to show through.

The Dodge tool is similar in effect to the Eraser tool, but is used in midtone areas. The tool lightens a colour rather than erases it – so reds turn pink. When used with a soft brush it makes a smooth transition (3), but when the spray brush is used it gives the impression of a speckly layer of paint (4).

The Burn tool does the opposite! This tool darkens colours, and is controlled by the Exposure setting. The higher you set this, the blacker the effect. By adjusting the exposure you can build up realistic areas of shadow. Again, the soft brush gives a smooth effect (5), while the spray brush we created is more spread out (6).

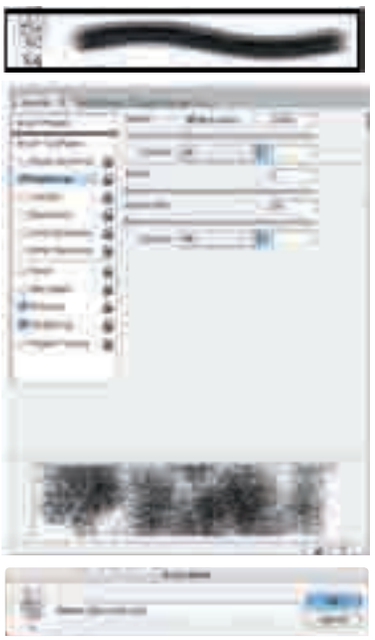
The Eraser tool

Dodge in the shine

Burn in the shadows

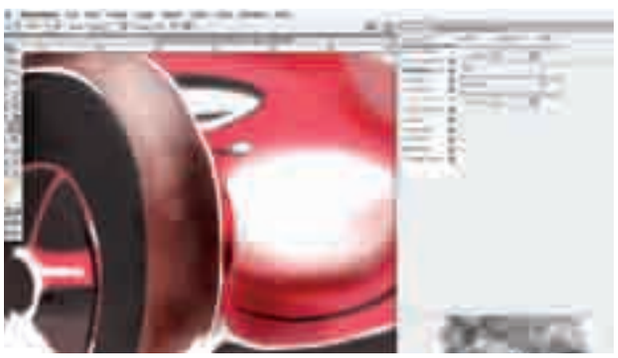
Making the airbrush

To create the spray brush, select the Stipple brush (54px) from the Natural Brushes set and open the Brushes palette (Window > Brushes). Click on Scattering and move the Scatter slider to 330%. Click the Both Axes box. Also select Airbrush and Smoothing. Click the little black arrow in the Brushes tab and select New Brush Preset. Give it a name and click OK. See the Alert box on page 29 for some vital information.



BURN BABY BURN

Build up your background



15 **Burn with spray** Choose the Burn tool and then load your newly created brush. With a low Exposure number (we used 23), start brushing over various areas. Concentrate on the tyres and the bits that you have already burnt. We also did a few strokes over the other shadow areas of the car.

16 **Powder spray** Select the Eraser and load your spray brush once more. Set the brush to 54 pixels and change the opacity to 70%. Lightly paint over the highlight areas you softened in step 12. The Eraser will allow some of the red to show through, giving the impression of spray.

17 **Burning background** Select the Burn tool and load the spray brush once more. With Range set to Midtones and Exposure set to 19%, start applying darker sprayed areas to the background. It's up to you where you do this – refer to our final image and you can see we applied it to the side of the buildings, the sea, the sky and the ramparts.

NEXT ISSUE | LEARN HOW TO PAINT A WINTER WONDERLAND

THERE'S NO SMOKE WITHOUT FIRE

Except here there is!

18 Smokey and the Bandit I Create a new layer, select the Brush tool and choose your spray brush once more. Set the foreground colour to white. Move your cursor in loose circular motions to create a cloudy effect. Choose a light grey and dab a few patches here and there. Pick a darker grey and do a couple of dabs.

19 Smokey and the Bandit II Duplicate your Smoke layer, go to Filter>Blur>Surface Blur (or Guassian Blur) and change Radius to 47 pixels and Threshold to 159. Click OK. We've done this in order to soften and merge the greys and whites and create a more smoky effect.

20 Middle of the road Select the Dodge tool and load your spray brush. Set Range to Midtones and Exposure to 100%. Paint over a few of the midtone colours – for example, the middle of the palm tree trunk and the small palm trees. The aim is to get more speckles and introduce some depth.

21 Gloss finish Make a new layer and choose a bright red for your foreground colour. Select the Brush tool and then load a soft mechanical brush. In a sweeping motion, gently brush across the middle of the bonnet, the right bumper and anywhere else you want a bit more of a sheen. Change this layer to Overlay and drop the opacity to 64%.

22 Firm but fair Although we've been saying that you have to keep edges soft, a few harsher highlight lines will make things shine. Create a new layer, pick the Brush tool and select a small hard mechanical brush at 6px. Set white as your foreground colour and click under the top car highlight. Hold down Shift, move your cursor to the end of the highlight and click again for a straight line.

23 Extra sheen Still on the same layer, continue to add white highlights where you want more sparkle on the car. Go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur and change Radius to 6.6. Click OK.

24 Pure bling Create a new layer and load the Assorted Brushes set. Pick the Crosshatch 4 and make sure your foreground colour is still white. Position the brush at the front end of the bonnet and click four or five times on the same spot. This adds a glint effect. Adjust the size of the brush and repeat on the grill and any other areas you like. Open up Gaussian Blur and set Radius to 1.2. You're finished!

Tip

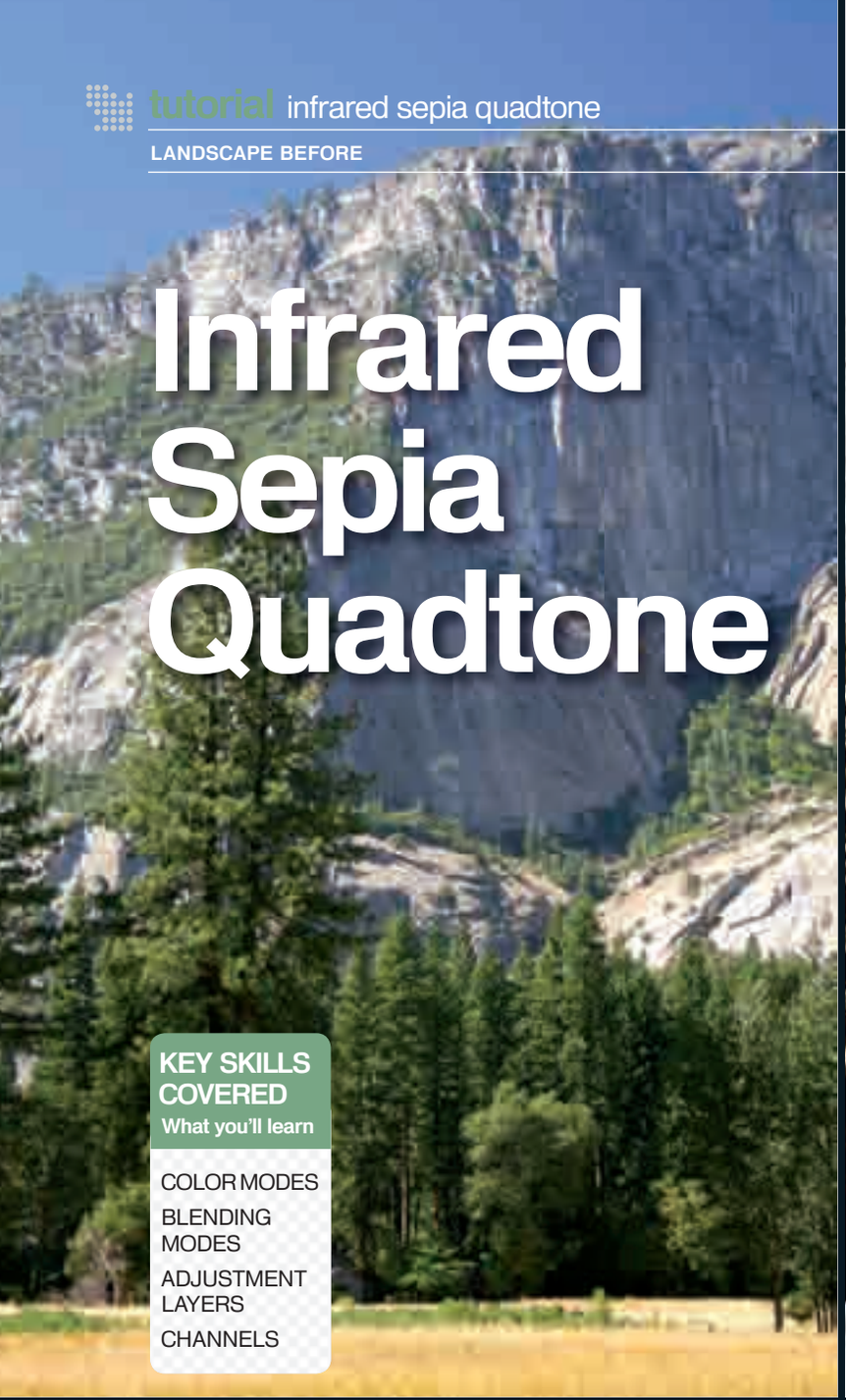
More spray

If you want a heavily sprayed look, the best bet is to add some noise (Filter > Noise > Add Noise). Set Amount to between 5 and 9, then check Monochromatic and also Gaussian.

LANDSCAPE BEFORE

LANDSCAPE AFTER

Infrared Sepia Quadtone



KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

- COLOR MODES
- BLENDING MODES
- ADJUSTMENT LAYERS
- CHANNELS

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
Approximately 20 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
Rob Anselmi

ON THE CD
Original file and action

Blend sepia toning and infrared for a twist on two photographic processes

You could spend your entire life focused on reproducing photographic effects using Photoshop, but this tutorial provides a twist. Instead of reproducing a single process, try blending two traditional processes together to create something altogether different. Here you'll learn how to bring together sepia-toning and infrared photography.

Traditionally, sepia toning took a colour or black-and-white photo and chemically treated it to end up with a warmer colourised print, usually in the brown, yellow and red colour range. Keep in mind as you work through the tutorial that while you will use a traditional brown sepia tone, this process can be used with any colours. Substitute your own colours and curves within the Duotone dialog (starting in step 6). And if you feel shy, load any predefined Duotone preset that ships with Photoshop.

Infrared photography uses highly specialised films that are sensitive to infrared and UV light. The result is a photograph with surreal and haunting qualities. Skies become black and trees become white. Infrared photography displays the world that's beyond our human vision, and it has many applications from aerial crop photography to forensics. While even the best Photoshop tricks cannot fully reproduce the effect, with a few blend and adjustment layers you can borrow a little bit of the effect's style and work it into your photograph.

So what happens when you merge these two processes together in the digital world? Follow the steps to find out.

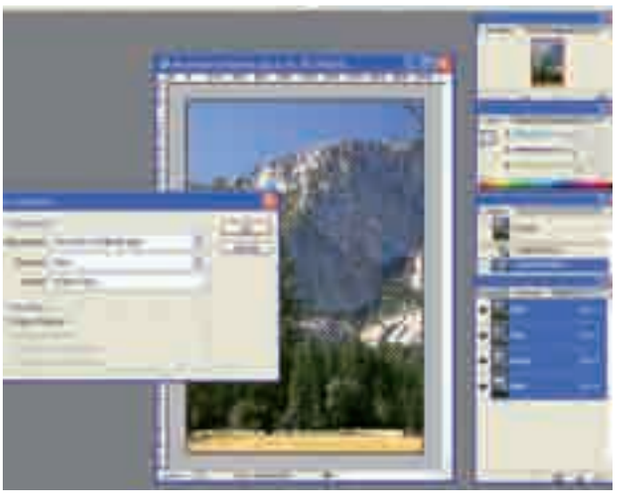
WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7.0 AND ABOVE

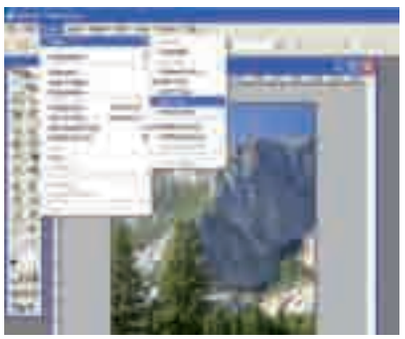
FEELING GREY

From colour to grey to sepia!

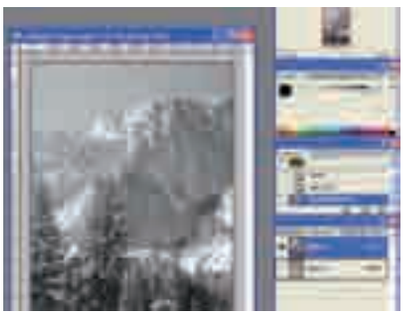
01 Select an appropriate image Start off by selecting an appropriate image. This effect works great on images of all kinds, but especially well on portraits and landscapes. If you don't have an image handy, load up the mountain image from the CD.

02 Duplicate the Green channel Ctrl/Cmd-click on the Green channel in the Channels palette, and save the selection (Select>Save Selection). Give the selection a name such as 'Green Copy' and click OK. Now press Ctrl/Cmd+D to deselect. This new channel will be saved for later use.





03 Greyscale conversion part 1 Our main objective is to convert the image into the best greyscale possible. To that end, we are going to use LAB Color mode as a pass-through. Convert the image to LAB Color mode (Image>Mode>Lab Color).



04 Greyscale conversion part 2 Go into the Channels palette, and delete both the A and B channels, leaving only the Lightness channel intact. Note that when you delete the first A channel, the B channel turns into 'Alpha 2'. So delete the Alpha 2 channel, leaving only 'Alpha 1'. See sidebar note.

05 Greyscale conversion part 3 Next, you can finally convert the image to Greyscale mode (Image>Mode>Grayscale). This method almost always provides a better greyscale conversion than could be achieved by directly converting from RGB to Greyscale mode.

06 Jump into Duotone mode This step is where most of the action happens. Convert your image once again into Duotone mode (Image> Mode>Duotone). Click the Type drop-down arrow and select Quadtone. This opens up the availability of two additional colour ink options, and the respective curves.

07 A little more about Quadtone colours In order to add another ink into the mix, hover over the colour square and select the colour of your choice. The Color dialog defaults to Pantone swatches. If you would like to use your own colours instead, click the Picker button to access the standard Photoshop Color Picker. Note: your colours must have a name entered next to them.

Expert Tip

Manipulating colour modes

When deleting one of the primary channels from a document, the other channels change names. For example, deleting the 'A' or 'B' channel renames the other two channels 'Alpha 1' and 'Alpha 2'. Technically, this is correct. A LAB Color mode image must have three channels. When one of the channels is deleted, the image moves to 'Multichannel' mode (a Photoshop catch-all colour mode). Not to worry though, because the remaining two channels still correspond to the colour information from LAB Color mode. Only their names change.

CD Resources

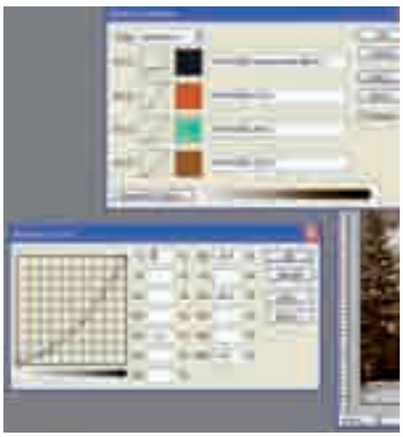
Quadtone preset

If you're not used to the Duotone dialog, the Quadtone preset used in this tutorial is on the CD. To use it, open the Duotone dialog and hit Load. Navigate to the CD and locate the SepiaQuadtone01.ado file. Select it; hit Load. The colours and curves used in the tutorial are loaded automatically.

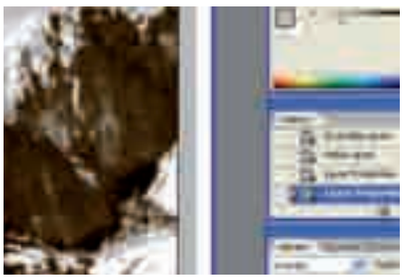
BRING IN OTHER TECHNIQUES

Infrared is used for impact

08 A little more about Quadtone curves Selecting colours is half the battle. Click the colour's associated curve on the right. A very intricate curve dialog opens. This maps the colour to the tonal range of the image. Try to make sure all four colour curves work together to provide an overall balance to the image – see note on the previous page.



09 Create a blurred overlay Go back to the Layers palette and duplicate the layer. Then apply a Gaussian Blur filter (Filter>Gaussian Blur) with a radius of approximately 15 pixels. Now change the blend mode of the duplicated layer to Overlay.

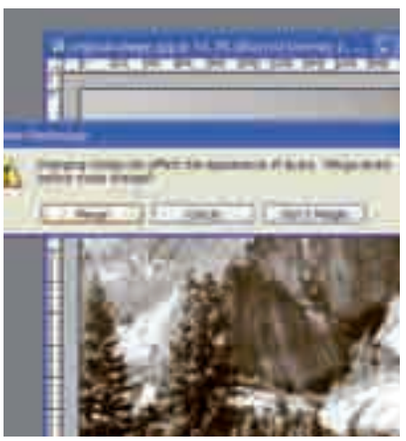


10 Double the intensity In order to intensify the effect of the blurred overlay layer, duplicate it one more time. This doubles the overlay effect and provides a dark glow to the image. High contrast meets soft glow to prove overpowering and haunting at once.

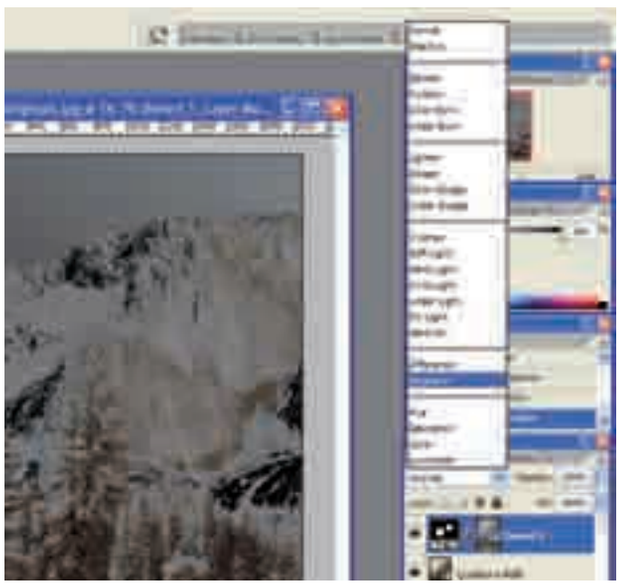
11 Faux infrared taking shape Duplicate the original Quadtone layer and move it to the top of the layer stack. Now change the blend mode to Screen and opacity to 50%. You can see the image start to take on an infrared quality.

12 Toning down (optional) If your original image is underexposed (ie very dark), you can select the duplicated Overlay Blur layer, bring down the opacity and adjust to taste. Here, the opacity was reduced to 50%.

13 Convert to RGB At this point the image could be considered complete. Convert it to RGB (Image>Mode> RGB Color) and you're done. Note: when converting you'll need to merge or flatten the layers, otherwise the colours shift. For this reason, save a copy before converting so as to have a copy with the layers intact.

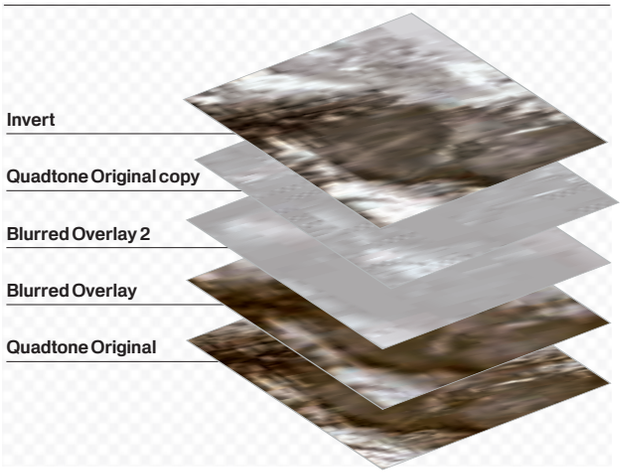


14 Adding more infrared If you would like to add more infrared, Ctrl/Cmd-click on the Green Copy channel previously saved in the Channels palette. Now go to the Layers palette and create an Invert adjustment layer. Switch the blend mode to Exclusion and pull the opacity down to about 50% or adjust it to your liking.



Layer structure

Beneath the surface



NEXT ISSUE | DISCOVER HOW TO CREATE A SOLARIZATION EFFECT

eMag

Colour-code your free image searches

Discover how to quickly find free images according to colour

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

SEARCH BY COLOUR

COPY COLOUR INFORMATION

Photos play a huge part in most Photoshop users' lives – just flick through this magazine and see how many times a tutorial starts off with one. But if you don't have a great library of your own photos to use, what are you to do? Companies like iStockphoto are very reasonable, but you don't want to shell out money on an image if you're just playing about with a look or technique, even if it's just a few dollars.

There are a lot of sites where people upload photos for others to use free of charge, but finding the right image can be a nightmare. That's why the Yotophoto site is a great idea. Go to **http:// yotophoto.com**, enter a search term and the service will trawl through images in the public domain (free to use). And now the search capabilities have got even better, with the ability to search by colour. Enter your hue of choice and in seconds you'll see pages of photos matching your colour. The search engine analyses each image to determine how prominent colours are, so it's very accurate.

The feature is in its first release, but it's already very powerful. Discover more about how it works below.

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
5 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
Jo Cole

SWATCH THE RESULTS APPEAR

Colourful search terms

01 Going advanced Load **http://yotophoto.com** into your web browser. The home page touts the virtues of the colour search service, but click the arrows in the middle box if you want to know more. To start using it, hit Advanced Search at the top of the page.

02 Name your search Now you're in the advanced area, there are various search terms to make your results far more accurate. We just want a straightforward search though, so enter our search term in the first field.

03 Now the colour Move your cursor over to the Color Search area and click on the Pick a Color link. A little colour picker will appear. Click a shade using the panel on the right and then hone your choice using the square. When you're finished, click Advanced Search.

04 View the spoils A page will appear with all the pictures that match your colour search. To access one of the results, click on its thumbnail and you'll be taken to the website it appears on.

05 More accurate If you are working on a Photoshop document and there's a precise colour you want to search for, click on it with the Eyedropper tool, double-click the Foreground square and copy the number into the Color Search field back in Yotophoto's advanced search. Search as before!

WORKS WITH | ANYTHING!

eMag

essentials

SKILL LEVEL

Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN

20 minutes

YOUR EXPERT

Zoe Mutter

Create a rust effect

Instead of making images look perfect, experiment with ageing and rusting them

If you want to add a degraded look to metal signs or objects, you don't have to wait around for them to rust. The same effect can be created simply in Photoshop using filters and blending modes.

It can be difficult to create a rusting effect that looks natural, because a heavily produced effect can look painted on and detached from the underlying photograph. Therefore the key with this tutorial is subtlety. This effect can also be applied to your photo-realistic creations as well as photos to digitally decay them. This effect is built up gradually using layers and then experimenting with their blending modes. And it's not only suitable for adding rust to objects or surfaces – the same principles can be applied to produce a rust texture, perhaps to be used as a background. The difference is you wouldn't change the opacity and blending modes of the layers because you don't have to worry about the underlying image showing through.

Why not try creating metallic text and then applying an old, rusty effect to it? Also, experiment with the foreground and background colours when applying the Clouds filter, and try changing the blending mode and layer opacity depending on the type of rust you want to create and the image it is applied to. If you really want to go to town with the rust effect, adding noise can make an object look even more decayed and grainy…

FIRST STEPS

Make a copy

01 Lasso the area

First, visit **http://sxc.hu** and enter 542402 to download our starter image. You need to register with the site, but it only takes a minute. Select the Magnetic Lasso tool and use it to go around the edge of the circular plaque. Choose Edit>Copy and then Edit>Paste to paste it onto a new layer. Now name this layer 'Copy'.

LET'S DO THE TIME WARP

Digitally speed up the oxidation process for metal objects in your photographs

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

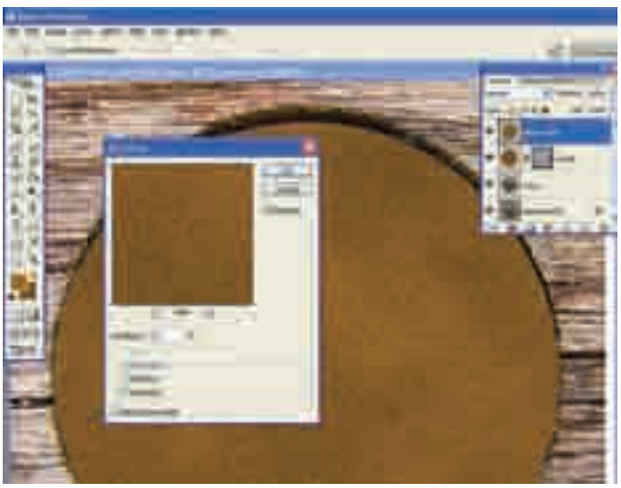
- AGEING AND DEGRADING OBJECTS
- CREATING TEXTURE
- CLOUDS AND NOISE FILTERS
- BLENDING MODES

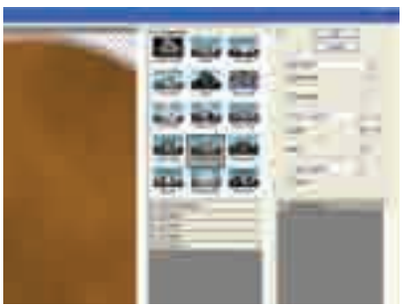
02 Use the Clouds filter Create another new layer above it. Name it 'Clouds'. Click the Add Layer Mask icon at the bottom of the palette. Hit 'D' to make your foreground and background colours black and white. Choose Filter>Render>Clouds.

03 Making the clouds visible Ctrl/Cmd-click the Copy layer thumbnail to create a selection. Click on the foreground colour swatch and enter R 155, G 65 and B 14. Select the Paint Bucket tool and click on the layer thumbnail of the Clouds layer. Now click inside the selection to fill it with a brown cloud texture.

04 Tone it down a bit Reduce the opacity of the Clouds layer to 85%. Create a new layer and call it 'Extra Rust'. Set your foreground colour to R 157, G 107, B 35 and your background colour to R 116, G 80 and B 18.

05 Amplify the effect with noise Ctrl/Cmd-click the layer thumbnail of the Copy layer to create a selection. Move back to the Extra Rust layer and choose Filter>Render>Clouds. Now select Filter>Noise>Add Noise and set Amount at 12%. Lastly, check Monochromatic and Gaussian.





06 It's all a blur Next, choose Filter>Blur>Motion Blur. Now enter an Angle of 90 and a Direction of 50. Choose Filter>Artistic>Rough Pastels and enter Stroke Length: 16, Stroke Detail: 6, Texture: Canvas, Scaling: 100%, Relief: 24, and choose a Light direction of Bottom.

07 Build up the rustiness Right/Ctrl-click on Extra Rust and choose Duplicate Layer. Change the blending mode of this layer to Soft Light. Select both layers and then right-click on one and select Merge Layers. Change this layer's blending mode to Darken and change the opacity to 54%.

08 Erase for a natural effect This effect will be too harsh. Choose the Eraser tool. Enter 100 into the Size box. Choose an opacity of 25% and leave Flow on 100%. Use the rubber to erase away random areas of the Extra Rust layer. If you still think the effect is too strong, choose the Clouds layer and erase away some of it.

Web resource

Picture credit

Our starter image for this tutorial came courtesy of Bill Davenport. Part of the thriving stock.xchng community, he has uploaded some excellent photos to the site, so make sure you have a look at them all. His username is lumix2004 and you can also visit his website at **http://lightnshadow.blogspot.com**.

Create a surreal masterpiece

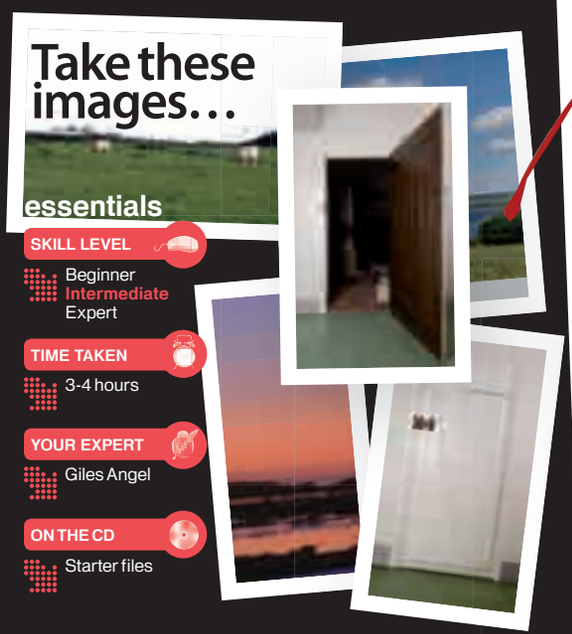
Have fun playing with your viewer's mind by creating a surreal piece of art

The Belgian artist Reneé Magritte was known for his realist surrealism, which continually challenged perceptions of reality. This tutorial strives to continue the challenge and enter into the realms of visual paradox. In this instance, photographic images plus a little help from Photoshop have replaced Magritte's paintbrush. You'll learn how to introduce a number of photographic elements into one scene, including some infamous fluffy white clouds and blend them together to produce a photo-surrealistic montage.

The start of the tutorial will touch on rescaling and altering perspective, as Magritte did with so many of his paintings. In this case, the door – originally far too large for the composite – will be scaled and the angle altered for effect.

You will continue isolating areas of individual layers with the Pen tool and use layer masks to reveal and hide selections. Different blend modes will also be used to combine the properties of two layers. Basic painting will be used in the Color blend mode to help boost image saturation and preserve texture.

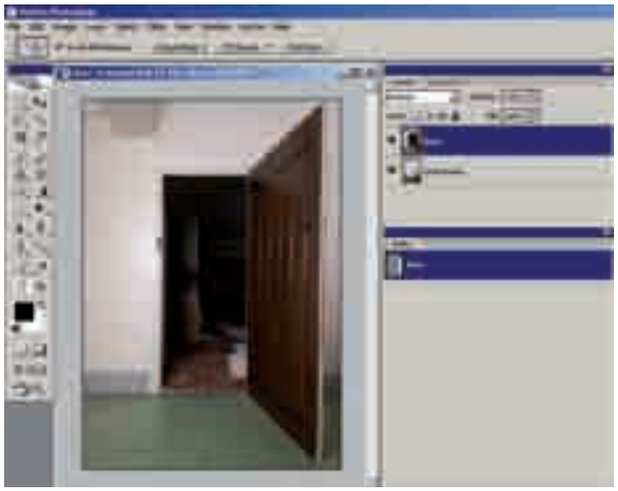
Finally, curve adjustment layers will be used with selective masking to modify brightness and contrast in specific areas to unify the elements as if they were part of the scenery.



WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7.0 AND ABOVE

AS ONE DOOR CLOSES…

…another one opens

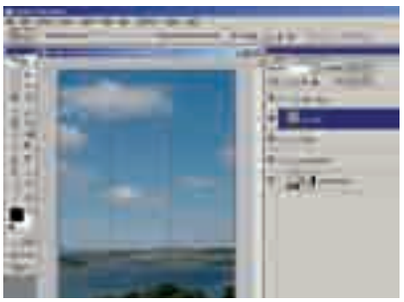


01 Create the door and frame Open door_frame.psd and door.psd from the disc. Hold Shift, select the Move tool and drag door.psd onto door_frame.psd. Label the layers 'Door' and 'Doorframe'. Select the Door layer, pick the Pen tool and draw round the door. Select the path, make a selection, right/Ctrl-click and choose a feather of 0.5 pixels. Copy and paste to a new layer.

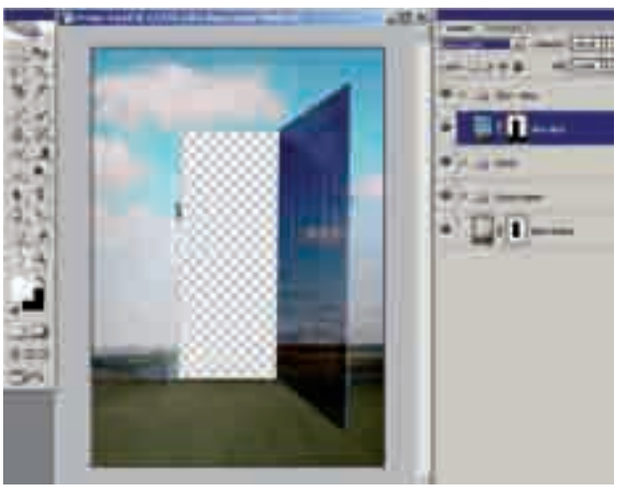
02 Resizing the door Name the new layer 'Door Cutout'. Hit Ctrl/Cmd+T, hold down Shift and drag the right-hand corner inwards to make the door smaller. Before pressing Return, hold the Ctrl/Cmd key and drag the top left and bottom left corners up and down until they match the edge of the frame again. Use guides to help you.

03 Create masking paths Now organise the layers into groups. Click the Folder icon at the bottom of the Layers palette to create groups for the door and doorframe. Drag the layers into the groups. Using the Pen, draw paths around the wall as shown, and another path for the open doorway. Save as 'Wall' and 'Open'.

04 Mask out the open doorway Select the Doorframe layer, then the Open Doorway path. Load the Open path as a selection, and press Ctrl/Cmd+Shift+I to invert the selection. With the selection still active, click the Layer Mask icon at the bottom of the Layers palette. This should reveal the open doorway and blank canvas underneath.



05 Introduce the daytime sky Open sky_day.psd, choose the Move tool (V) and drag it onto the working document. Close the other file to free up RAM. Create a group for the sky and call it 'Sky Day'. Select the Wall path, click on the Arrow icon at the top of the Paths palette and choose Make Selection.



06 Mask sky around the doorway and blend with the wall While the Wall path selection is active and with the Sky Day layer selected, click on the Layer Mask icon to mask out the sky around the floor and doorway. Now change the blending mode to Hard Light; this will make the doorframe and wall show through the sky.

07 Blend the door with the background Duplicate the Door Cutout layer and label it 'Door Painted'. Select the Brush tool (B), double-click on the foreground colour swatch in the Tools palette and type 242 for the RGB values (grey). Ctrl/Cmd-click on the Door Painted layer to load a selection. Change the Brush blend mode to Color in the Options toolbar and paint inside the selection.

KEY SKILLS COVERED

What you'll learn

- ISOLATING AREAS
- MASKING TECHNIQUES
- ADJUSTMENT LAYERS
- TRANSFORM TOOL
- BLEND MODES ON LAYERS
- COLOR BLEND MODE ON BRUSHES

Tip

Layer masks

An easy way to remember how masking works is that white (light) reveals and black (dark) conceals the adjustment or layer underneath.

Expert Tip

Paint and preserve texture

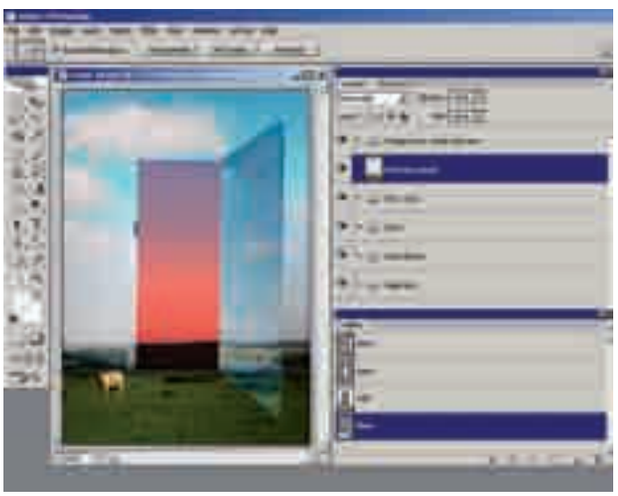
Painting with the blend mode in the Options toolbar set to Color, will add colour while preserving surface texture and the detail underneath.

COUNTRY SETTING

Build a world for the door

08 Inverting the door for a ghost-like feel The painting will reduce the brown and increase the blue hue. Duplicate the Door Painted layer and label it 'Door Painted Inverted'. Press Ctrl/Cmd+I to invert the image. Now change the blend mode of the layer to Hard Light and reduce the opacity to 80%.

09 Add night sky to open doorway Open sky_night.psd, drag the file into the document, move the layer to a group and call it 'Night Sky'. Use the Move tool (V) to align the night horizon with the daytime one on the wall. Make a path selection to match day and night horizons, and use the Clone tool (S) to fill gaps in the hillside.



10 Adding the grass and cow foreground Open horizon_cows.psd and drag the layer Horizon Cutout onto the document. Create a group for this and call it 'Foreground – Grass and Cow'. Align the layer with the floor and the bushes with the skirting board. Change the Horizon Cutout layer blend mode to Hard Light. Now draw a path around the floor area and save the path as 'Floor'.

11 Masking and blending the floor Load the Floor path as a selection and click on the Mask icon. This will mask out the bushes and allow the water from the background image to blend into the bottom of the door. We now have the basis of the montage complete, and it's just a case of fine-tuning details such as contrast, colour and shadow details.

Tip

Organise your layers

When working with numerous layers, organise them into groups and label them clearly. This will help locate and make adjustments quicker, particularly when returning to a document that has been shelved for weeks or months.

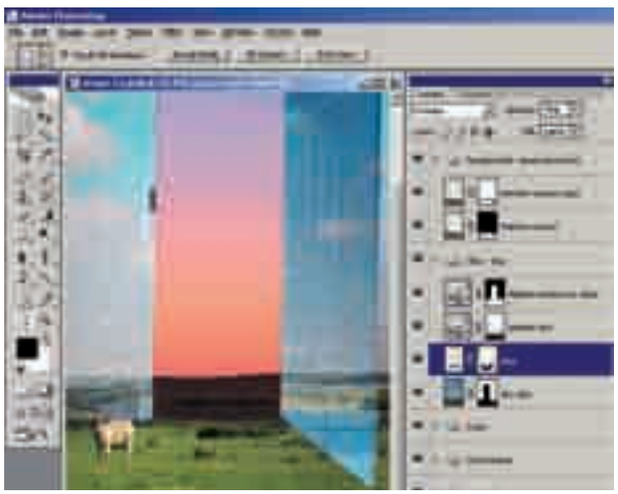
12 Refining the grass foreground Duplicate the Horizon Cutout layer and change the blend mode to Lighten. Click the Layer Mask icon and select the Brush tool. Select black as the colour and paint in black on the mask around the bottom of the door and the doorway to hide the foliage. Load the Floor path and invert the selection to constrain the mask more accurately.

13 Darken the sky Open the Sky-day group, select the Sky Day layer. Click the Adjustment Layer icon and hit Curves. Add a point in the middle of the curve and pull downwards to darken. Select the Adjustment mask (white square next to the Curves thumbnail on the Layers palette) and pick the Gradient tool. Set the foreground and background to black and white (D) and draw a gradient on the mask from the bottom upwards.

14 Lighten the foreground Now use the same technique to lighten the foreground. Go to the Wall path in Paths and load it as a selection. Invert the selection, and then choose a new Curves adjustment layer. A mask will automatically be created next to it. Click on the midpoint of the curve and drag upwards to brighten things up.

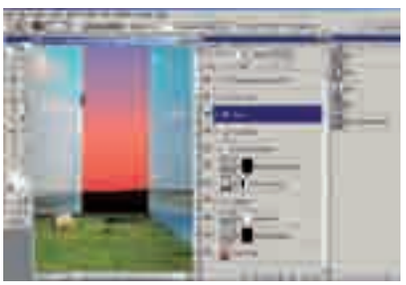
WEB RESOURCES | GET INSPIRED BY MAGRITTE'S WORK AT **WWW.MAGRITTE.COM**

FINAL ADJUSTMENTS
Make the surreal pop



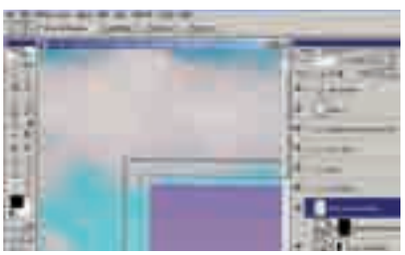
15 Add sea and land detail Select the Sky Day layer then draw a rectangle using the Marquee tool as shown in the picture. Press Cmd/Ctrl+J to copy and paste to a new layer. Label the layer 'Sea' and reduce the opacity to 70%. Click on the Add Mask icon and use a black brush to mask out the hard edges.

16 Door adjustment layers Pick the Door Painted Inverted layer and Ctrl/Cmd-click to load the selection. Click the New Adjustment Layer icon and choose Curves. Drag upwards to lighten. Call this layer 'Lighten Door'. Repeat, reselect the Door selection, click the mask and draw a gradient over the door to cover the bottom. Repeat, and mask the top of the door.



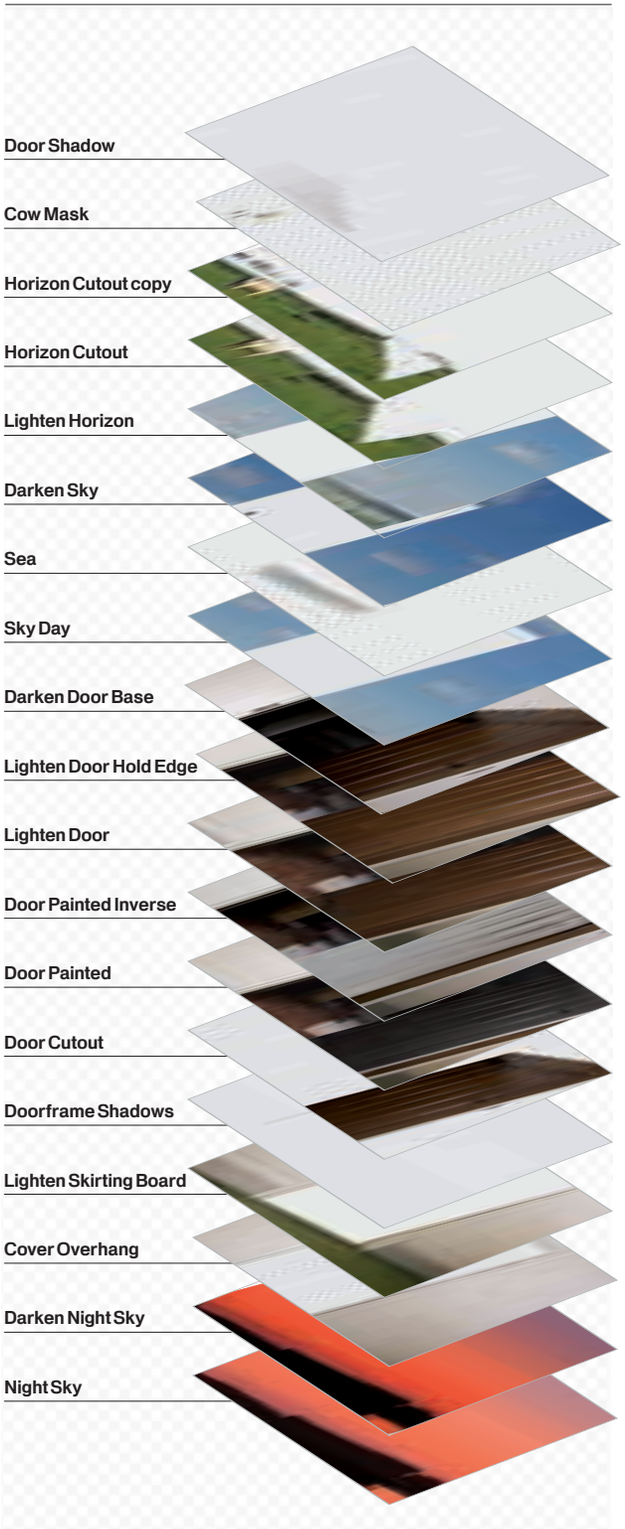
17 Adjust skirting board and night sky Once again, it's just a case of isolating the areas with the Pen tool to make curve adjustments based on those selections. Each adjustment layer is reduced in opacity accordingly, to make the effect more subtle. Load the Skirting Board path in the main document and use Curves to lighten it.

18 Remove floor lines on the cow Select the Horizon Cutout layer, use the Marquee tool (M) and hit Ctrl/Cmd+J (copy and paste). Drag the layer above the other two in the group. Set the blend mode to Normal. Hold down Alt/Opt and click the Mask layer to cover the image with a black mask. Use a white brush to paint on the mask to remove the cow lines.



19 Add extra shadows Using the Pen, draw a path around the door edge and save the path as 'Doorframe Shadows'. Create a new layer and right/Ctrl-click the path, make a selection (radius 1 pixel), fill with black and reduce the layer opacity. Create another layer in the Doorframe group, and draw a path to simulate a shadow at the base of the door. Repeat, but fill with dark green; change the blend mode to Hard Light.

Layer structure
What exactly is behind that door?



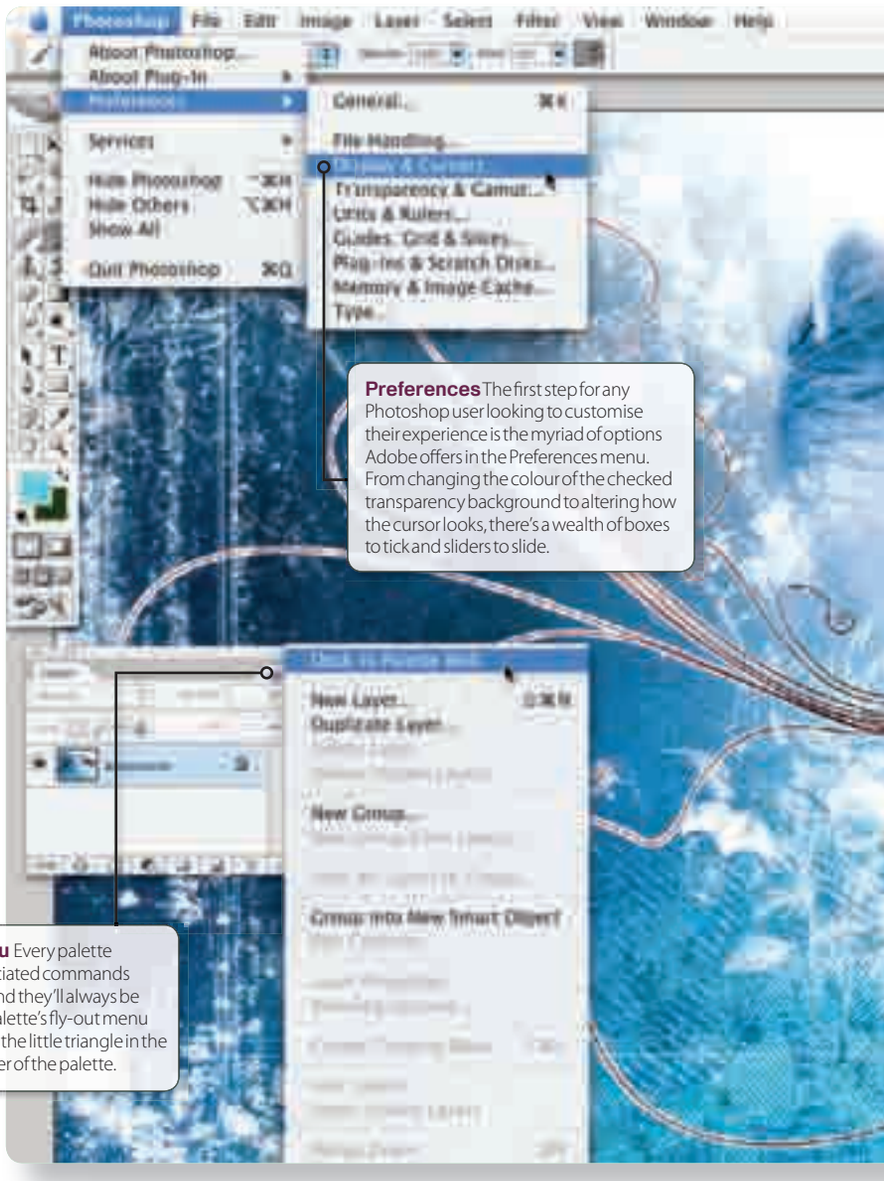
THE BIG TECHNIQUE

Create a custom workspace

Arrange and organise your palettes with Photoshop's workspace options

Chances are you're so used to working in Photoshop you never even think about how you could work more efficiently. Or perhaps you're just getting started in Adobe's image-editing behemoth and are struggling to find your way around without realising how much you can control how the program looks and works.

If either of those scenarios sounds familiar, then perhaps you should take a few moments out of your creative flow to check out how you can customise and save your workspaces. Photoshop's palette-based approach may focus your actions but it can lead to a cluttered screen. By carefully arranging and saving custom workspaces for specific tasks such as colour correcting, retouching or painting, you can spare yourself acres of screen real-estate and miles of mouse movement. Just check out the next four pages to see how you can take control of, and clean up, your working environment .



Preferences The first step for any Photoshop user looking to customise their experience is the myriad of options Adobe offers in the Preferences menu. From changing the colour of the checked transparency background to altering how the cursor looks, there's a wealth of boxes to tick and sliders to slide.

Fly-out menu Every palette has a few associated commands and options, and they'll always be found in the palette's fly-out menu accessed from the little triangle in the top-right corner of the palette.

Collapsing palettes

Give yourself some more room

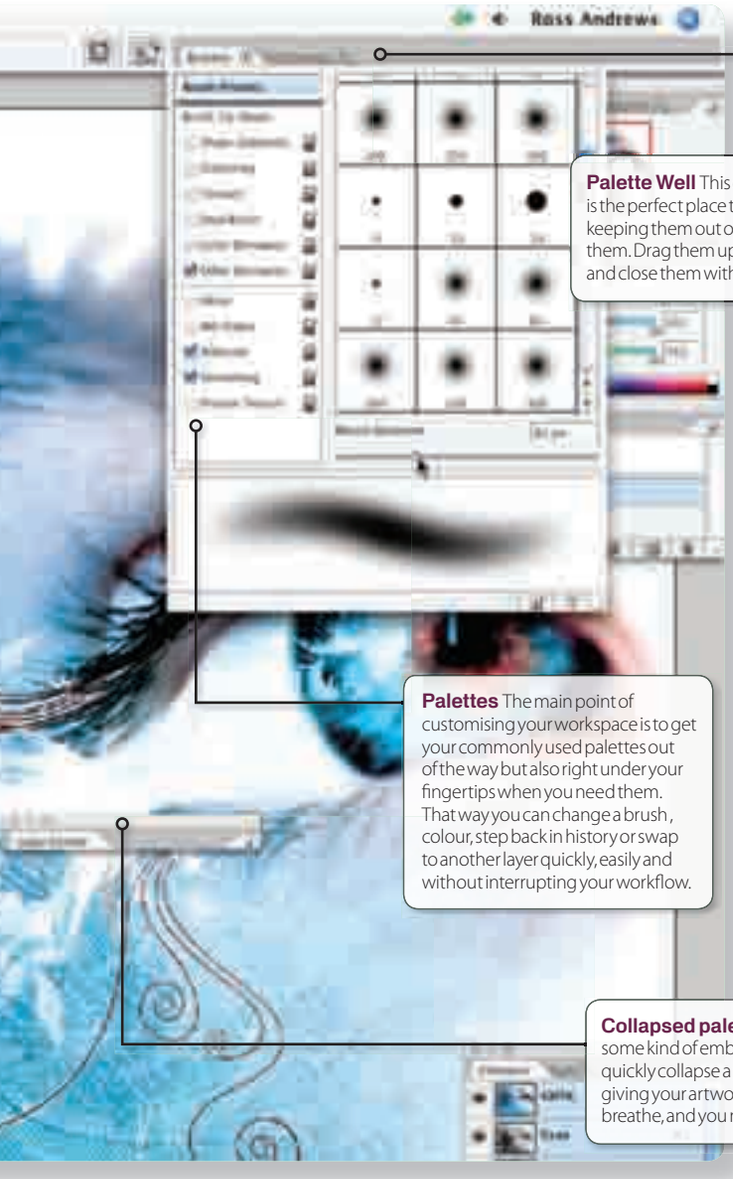
If you're a self-confessed palette junkie and you can't help but have them littered all over your screen, the simplest way to save yourself some space and actually see a little of the art you're working on is to collapse them down to just their title bars and tabs. To accomplish this feat of minimising magic, just quickly click the palette's top bar (or one of the palette tabs) twice. The entire palette will retract out of the way. To expand it again, simply double-click the top bar again.

Get your palettes in order

Keeping it all nice and tidy

As soon as you start moving palettes around, you'll notice they have a habit of snapping to particular areas of the screen, such as the edge or corners, and to each other. This is a simple helping hand from Adobe, and you have to wonder if it stems from extensive market research into the number of designers who use Photoshop and their desire to have everything lining up 'just so'. Either way, it makes it a snap to organise your workspace quickly, cleanly and easily.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP CS2



Palette Well This dark grey docking area is the perfect place to hide your palettes, keeping them out of the way until you need them. Drag them up here and then open and close them with just one click.

Palettes The main point of customising your workspace is to get your commonly used palettes out of the way but also right under your fingertips when you need them. That way you can change a brush, colour, step back in history or swap to another layer quickly, easily and without interrupting your workflow.

Collapsed palette Rather than being some kind of embarrassing disease, you can quickly collapse a palette out of the way, giving your artwork a little more room to breathe, and you more room to work.

Tip

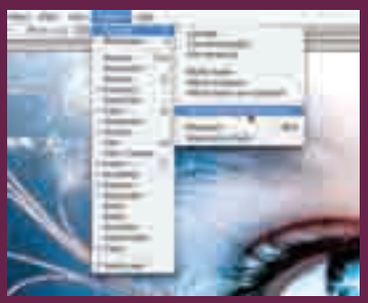
Zooming

If you're fed up with having to resize your document's window every time you zoom in or out, head over to Photoshop's preferences and check the box next to Zoom Resizes Windows, in General Preferences.

Viewing multiple windows

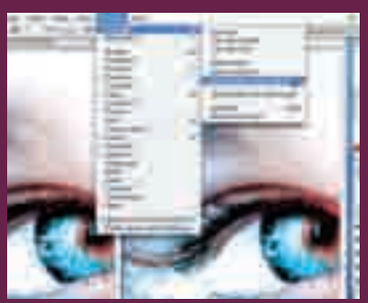
…when I'm arranging windows…

Whether you've got more than one file open, or even multiple windows showing one file, Photoshop makes it breeze to take control of them



01 New window If you're working on detail but still want to see the overall image, open up a new window by choosing New Window For… from Arrange in the Window menu. This will open up a new view of the one document.

02 Closer look Leave the original window zoomed out and behind the new one, then zoom in to see the detail in the newly spawned view. Any changes you do will update in both windows simultaneously.



03 Compare and contrast If you've got more than one image open and you want to compare them all, start by choosing one of the Tile options in the Arrange menu, and then choose Match Zoom and Location.

Round 'em all up

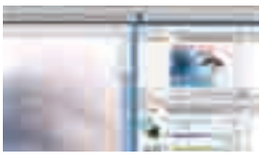
Mix and match your own palettes

The more you use Photoshop, the more you'll find there are certain palettes you catch yourself using all the time, such as Layers, Color and Brushes. The simplest and most effective tweak you can make to your workspace layout is to place all your favourite palettes into one tabbed group. Start with your favourite palette open and get rid of any previously grouped palettes you don't want by clicking on their tabs and dragging them away from the group. Open up your next palette if you can't already see it and then simply click on its tab and drag it into the area next to your first palette's tab. Keep doing this until you have your bespoke grouped palette set sorted.

All's well with the palettes

Clear the clutter off your screen

There are enough keyboard shortcuts to remember in Photoshop without having to commit to memory all the shortcuts for summoning and dismissing palettes. If instead you want to have all your favourite palettes instantly accessible, yet your artwork clean, you need to turn to the Palette Well taking up the right-hand end of your Options bar, just below the menus. Simply grab a palette's tab and drag it up into this area to dock it, or pick Dock to Palette Well from the palette's fly-out menu. You can then expand and contract it with just one click of the tab.



CREATE CUSTOM WORKSPACES

Speed up your common tasks by creating bespoke workspaces to suit them

essentials

SKILL LEVEL

Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN

30 minutes

YOUR EXPERT

Ross Andrews

01 Drag 'em out Start by getting all of the default palettes out of the Palette Well to make room for the ones you use often. Click their tabs and then drag them down and out into the document area.

02 Close them down There's bound to be a few that you never use, so now's the time to close them down by clicking the little red button in the top-left corner on a Mac, or by clicking the red cross in the top-right corner if you're using Windows.

03 More of the same Continue your housekeeping by separating palettes into palette groups (such as History and Actions or Layers, Channels and Paths) by clicking on each palette's individual tab and dragging it away from the group. Close down any you don't want to keep around, and leave the rest floating there for now – we'll tidy them away later.

Tip

More options

Many of the palettes have more options available. These are accessible from the palette's fly-out menu. With some you can change how the palette looks, while others open up more settings.

04 More mess Now that you've spent a while closing palettes down, it's time to open some up again. If there are any palettes you use that aren't already open, it's time to launch them from the Window menu.

05 Dock 'em well Now you've got all the palettes you need open, it's time to tidy them up – as we promised you in step three. There'll be some you use now and again when you need them, such as Layers, Channels and Color, so drag these by the palette's name tab into the Palette Well in the Options bar.

06 Snap to it There will also be some palettes that you need open and viewable all the time, such as the Navigator or Info. Tidy these up by dragging one into the top-right corner of your screen and then dragging the next one up to meet it. As the second palette approaches the first it will lock to the bottom, keeping everything neat and tidy.

Check out the view modes

Clear your document of window clutter

So many of Photoshop's tools, such as Crop, Rotate and Transform, rely on you being able to click outside the document area. So much so that we're betting you often find yourself resizing your window so you can see what's happening off the side of the document. Add to that the distraction of having your desktop background and icons showing behind your screen, and you'll understand why this keyboard shortcut quickly becomes a firm favourite. With an image open, simply hit the 'F' key to get rid of your window surround, scrollbars and title bar, and display the document on a plain grey background. When zoomed in you can still get

around using the Hand tool (press the spacebar and drag with the mouse). Press 'F' again to display the image on a black background with no menu bar, and then 'F' again to return it to the Normal view.

The joy of Tab

Clear off those palettes

No matter how carefully you arrange your palettes, they're going to end up getting in the way sometimes. The good news is that you can temporarily banish them with one keystroke – the Tab key –then just hit it again to bring them back. This is a perfect solution when you need a little more space, or when you're showing off your work to someone else!

07 **Save your workspace** Now that you've put all the hard work in, wouldn't it be a shame if you messed it all up by moving palettes around willy-nilly. Save yourself the hassle of rearranging it all by saving your workspace. From Workspace in the Window menu, choose Save Workspace.

08 **Give it a name** When the Save Workspace window pops up, give it a name, tick the first and third options and click Save. This will store all your carefully arranged palette locations and menu customisations.

09 **Bespoke workspaces** That setup is fine for general Photoshop work, but you can also create custom workspaces for more specific tasks – in this case painting. Open up the Brushes palette and drag the Color palette out of the Palette Well.

10 **Get them just so** Time for a little more arranging. The Brushes palette can head up into the Palette Well, – we'll only need it now and again to change brush style (brush size is quickly changed using the square bracket keys). The Color palette is useful to have around all the time, so dock that underneath the Navigator and Info.

11 **Save again** When your Painting workspace is set up, just head back over to the Save Workspace command to commit it to Photoshop's memory. Give it a descriptive name and hit Save again.

12 **Switch between them** Quickly switching between workspaces or resetting to your favourite is easy. Your custom workspaces appear automatically at the bottom of the Workspace menu for you to select. Or even better – check out the tip below for an even quicker method!

Colour up your menus

Give yourself a helping hue

Hidden away in the Workspace menu is the option to colour menu commands. This is a great helping hand for learning tasks and tools – just colour up the ones you need to remember. Open up Keyboard Shortcuts and Menus from Workspace in the Window menu and click the Menu tab. Find the menu item you need in the list, and then choose the colour from the pop-up menu. You can also opt to hide menu items you never use or need.

Change your keyboard shortcuts

Have things your way…

There are bound to be some menu items you use all the time, that you wish had keyboard shortcuts – perhaps a filter or two, or maybe even the workspaces you've saved by following the tutorial above. The good news is that you have the power to customise the Photoshop keyboard commands to your heart's content. Open Keyboard Shortcuts and Menus from Workspace in the Window command, find the menu item shortcut you want to change, delete or assign, and enter the new key command into the Shortcut column. You'll be warned of any potential conflicts in the bottom area of the window.

Jamie Mahon

Jamie featured in issue 10's Readers' Profile and we were so impressed with his work we got him to share some of his secrets! To see more, go to **http://dreamcapture.deviantart.com**

Add drama with mist effects

Can't seem to get up early enough to catch that morning mist? No need to worry – you don't have to with this easy tutorial…

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
About one hour

YOUR EXPERT
Jamie Mahon

ON THE CD
Image before

Autumn is a wonderful time of the year for photography in general – an early morning rise and a beautiful vista can result in some of the most amazing and atmospheric shots one could ever hope to produce.

However, there are certain conditions which can prevent you getting the results you want, and this can often be down to the weather on that particular morning. At times it can give rise to far too many variables that can make all the difference between a shot that is merely okay and a shot that is fantastic. But, with the advent of the digital darkroom, atmosphere can be replicated within the computer with a little patience and understanding.

Utilising the tools within Photoshop (and not some fancy third-party plug-in), you're able to create a scene that can evoke emotion. You can use the Channel Mixer to take the information in a colour image to produce exquisite black-and-white tones, and simple brush experimentation will create a veil of mist to suggest a shot was taken at six in the morning rather that two in the afternoon. Gradient fills will burn and tone areas of the image, and layer masks and clipping masks will provide a finer and subjective control over the subject.

All these tools are at your disposal, and the best way to utilise them is to experiment, understanding the layer blend properties, and taking away information in an image in a non-destructive way.

These are your tools – so follow our step-by-step tutorial to find out exactly how to use them.

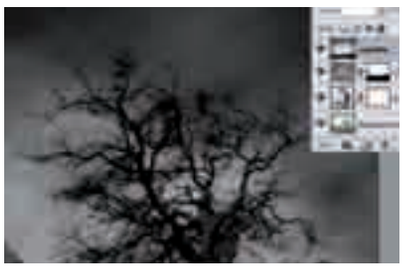
WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7.0 AND ABOVE

CREATE A MISTY MORNING

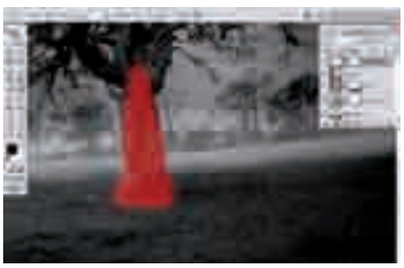
The technique behind the illusion

01 Mixing the channels Open up the image supplied on the disc, go to the Layers palette, click the Layer Adjustment button and select Channel Mixer. Check the Monochrome box, change the values as seen in the screenshot. Hit the 'D' key to set Foreground and Background colours to default.

02 Send in the clouds Create a new layer and go to Filters>Render>Clouds. Go to Edit>Transform>Perspective. Spread out the clouds, by dragging the square handles. Add a layer mask and use the Gradient tool to take away the cloud from the bottom of the image. Do this by dragging from the bottom to the top of the trees in the background.

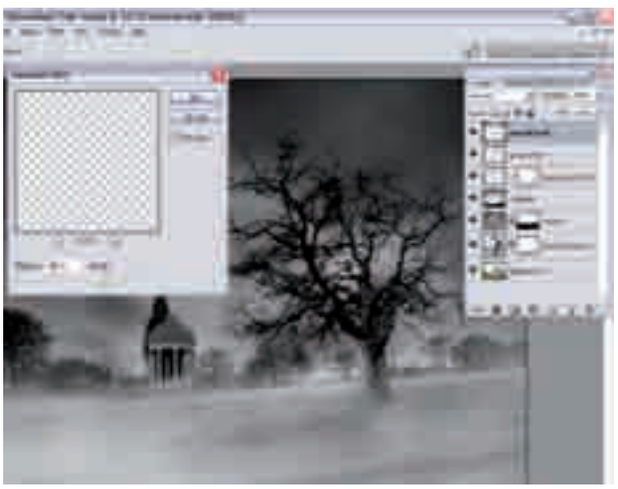


03 Dark, but not too dark Create a new layer and call it 'Vignette'. Select the Gradient tool, and set Foreground to Transparent, with black as the foreground. Zoom out to see the area around the canvas, select the Gradient and click outside of the canvas from the right and drag near to the tree. Repeat on all sides of the canvas. Set the blending mode for this layer to Multiply and the opacity to 75%.

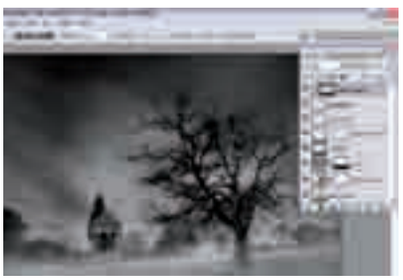


04 It's foggy out there Create a new layer, call it 'Background Mist', select a medium-sized soft brush and set white as the foreground. Paint a line across the tree line in the background. Go to Filters>Blur>Gaussian Blur and set to 5-25 pixels, depending on your taste. Add a layer mask and paint over the tree trunk to continue the background mist. Set the blending mode to Screen and opacity to 30%.

05 Up to the ankles Add a new layer, 'Ground Mist', and select a 200-pixel soft brush. In the Brushes palette, hit Scattering, check Both Axes and move the slider to 250. Paint the bottom of the canvas and go to Filters>Blur> Gaussian Blur. Set Radius: 50. Pick Motion Blur; set Angle: 37, Distance: 426. In Edit>Fade, set Opacity: 75%, blending mode to Screen with 65% opacity.



06 Create more atmosphere Create a new layer and call it 'Overall Mist'. Here we want to fill out more of the foreground. Again, select the Brush tool with the same settings as the previous step. Paint the lower half of the image. Now go to Filters>Blur>Gaussian Blur and diffuse this mist with a Radius setting of 50 pixels. Set the opacity to 58%.



07 Clipping the mist In the Layers palette select the Vignette layer and duplicate it. Call it 'Vignette Copy' and move it above the Overall Mist layer. Place the mouse pointer between the layers and press Alt/Option. You've created a clipping mask where the Vignette Copy layer will only affect the Overall Mist layer. Set the blending to Multiply and the opacity to 75%.

KEY SKILLS COVERED

What you'll learn

- ADJUSTMENT LAYERS
- CLOUDS FILTER
- BLUR FILTERS
- CURVES ADJUSTMENT
- LAYER MASK
- CLIPPING MASK
- GRADIENT FILL TOOL
- SCATTERING

Expert Tip

Keep it in context

Keep in context what you are enhancing with atmosphere and mist. A landscape, church and most things rural are the most suitable subjects which benefit from this tutorial. Contemporary urban locations just don't have the same impact, and the suggestion of atmosphere can feel alien and unnatural. In essence you are creating a scene, and that scene has to present a connection to the viewer. Without that connection, the subtext to a creation will be lost on others.

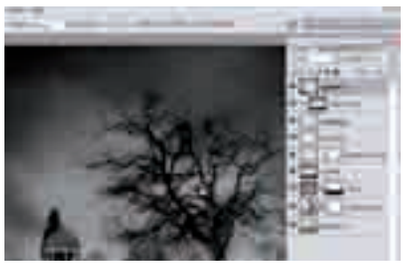
Tool School

Masking

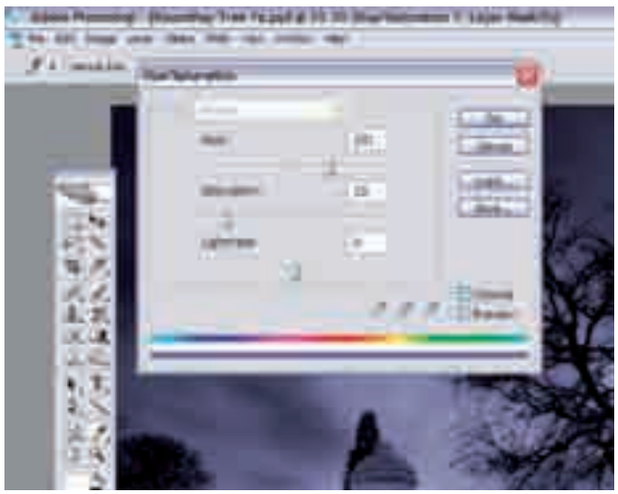
A mask on a layer can be a powerful tool for editing, as it lets you take away info you don't need without destroying it. This can be very helpful when you need to retrieve the info, or if a selection needs to be refined. History in Photoshop is useful but limited, but with Masking you can save all the crucial image info for later.

HEIGHTEN THE ATMOSPHERE

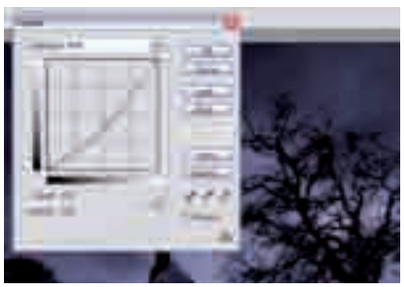
Add a dramatic flourish



08 More of the dark stuff Despite it being redundant we need another Vignette layer, but not a copy. Create a new layer and call it 'Vignette 2', selecting the Gradient Fill tool and click outside of the canvas from the right and drag near to the tree as in step three. Darken the edges of the canvas, but not as much as previously. Set the blending mode to Multiply with 30% opacity.

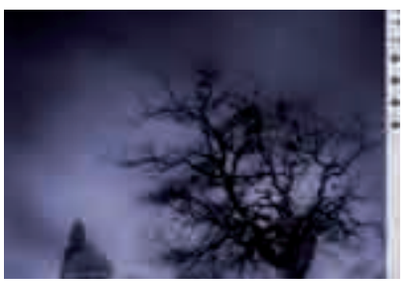


09 Colourful emotions Colour in general is another powerful tool for creating emotion. Create an adjustment layer by going to Layer>New Layer Adjustment>Hue/Saturation. Check the Colorize box and use the settings shown in the screenshot. Set the opacity of this layer to 40%.

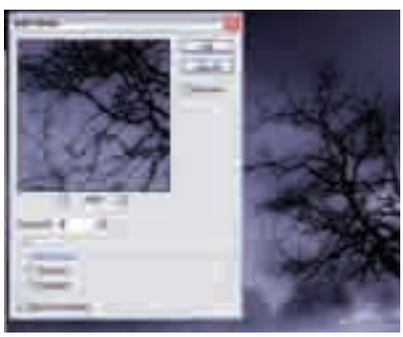


10 Downward curve Select the Background layer and go to Layer>New Adjustment Layer>Curves. On the graph, click and drag the centre of the line down and to the right a little. This will darken the mid-tones on the Background layer and will make the tree a touch darker and provide stronger definition to the mid-tones.

11 Flatten and blur Select Layer> Flatten Image – everything is now on one layer. Copy this layer (Layer>Duplicate Layer) and then go to Filters>Blur>Gaussian Blur and select a pixel radius of 50. Set the blending mode to Multiply and the opacity to 50%. Duplicate this layer but set the layer blending mode to Screen.



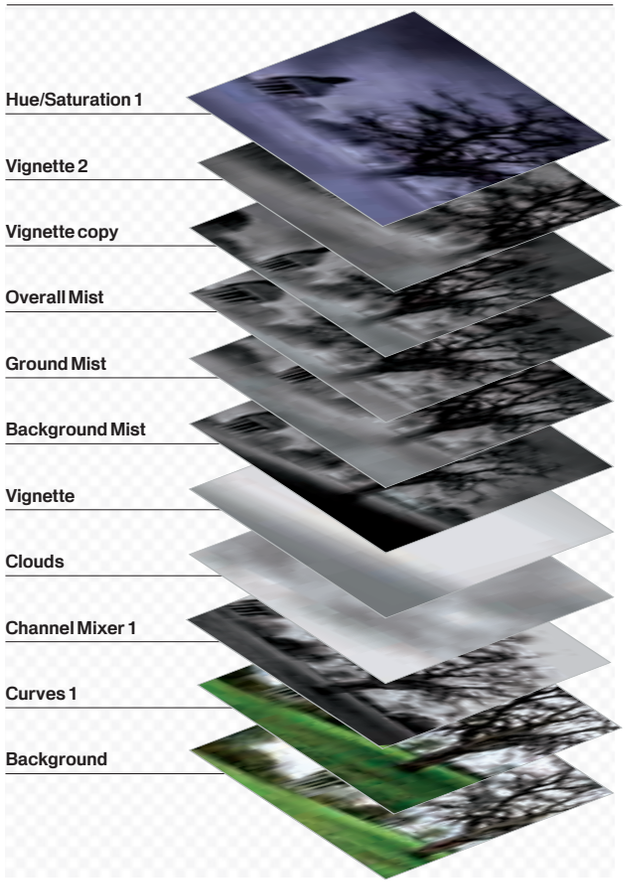
12 Grouping it all together Create a group folder by going to Layer>New>Group and place the two new layers in this folder, with the Screen layer above the Multiply layer. Select the group folder and Add New Layer Mask. Select a standard brush with the opacity set to 30%, set the foreground colour to black and paint in the area of the tree branches.



13 Essential grain Once again, flatten the image and then go to Filters> Noise>Add Noise and input 2.5; also check the Gaussian and Monochromatic options. This will help to add atmosphere to the image and suggest emotion to the viewer.

The layer structure

Seeing through the fog



eMag

Displace filter

Discover the secrets of achieving perfect results with Photoshop's Displace filter

The Displace filter is something of a mystery to many Photoshop users, and has been known to send even veterans running from their desktops. Unlike most other filters, the Displace effect requires a little effort from the user, and can't be turned on and off at the click of a mouse.

Perseverance pays dividends, though, for the Displace filter is one of Photoshop's most powerful features. In essence, this tool enables you to assign the texture of one object onto another – letting you carve shapes out of stone or inscribe your favourite image on the House of Commons.

The key is using a displacement map, where you create a desaturated and high-contrast PSD of your background texture, then apply it to the foreground image. The result is your foreground image will genuinely look part of the background.

As the name suggests, displacing actually moves parts of the target image according to your settings. It's essential that you turn your displacement map into a greyscale image, as the Displace function works in this palette – with black and white affording the greatest movement in the image, and grey the least. You can see this when you tweak the contrast. The difference between 'highs' and 'lows' in the image is shown in black and white, which is just what the Displace filter needs.

The finished result After a little work with displacement maps and blend modes, the tennis player's T-shirt bears a logo that crumples and stretches in exactly the same ways as the fabric below. To anyone seeing the image for the first time, the logo has always been there.

Displace settings Probably the most difficult part of the Displace function, the Displace settings require a lot of trial and error to perfect. The figures represent the amount in percentage that the image will be displaced or moved horizontally and vertically.

Your displacement map

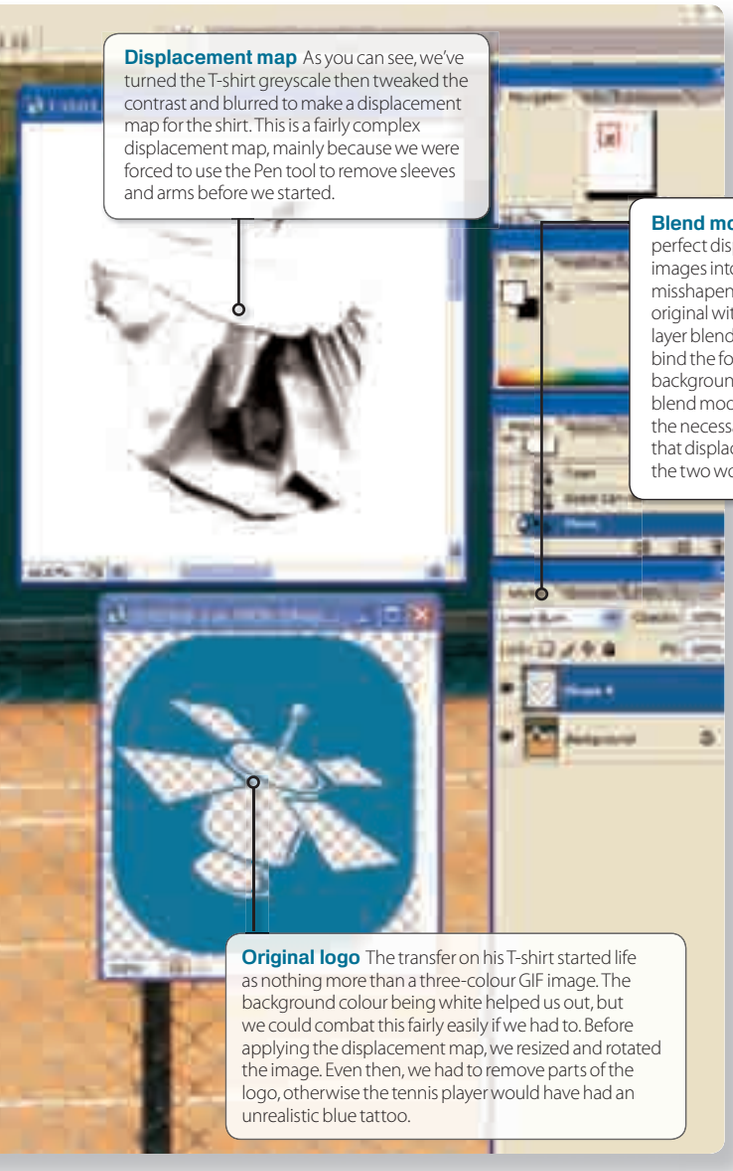
Creating the tools you need

Always create your displacement map out of the background image, as it's this texture you want to apply to the foreground. Open the image and go to Image>Adjustments> Desaturate. We want to bring out blacks and whites, so go to Image> Adjustments>Brightness & Contrast, and tweak the Contrast setting to between 50 and 75. It's best to apply a Gaussian Blur (Filter>Blur> Gaussian Blur) to take away sharp edges. Save the image as a PSD file, and you have a displacement map.

Realistic graffiti

Blends are your friends

Creating graffiti is simple. Once you've created the displacement map, type a message on the wall. We used the Perspective tool in the Free Transform menu to match the perspective of the brickwork. Apply the displacement map using the Displace filter, and you'll get some bumpy letters which look separate from the wall. That's easy to fix – click the Normal drop-down menu in the Layers palette and scroll through until you find a blend mode that ties your background and foreground together. In our case, Soft Light did the trick.



Displacement map As you can see, we've turned the T-shirt greyscale then tweaked the contrast and blurred to make a displacement map for the shirt. This is a fairly complex displacement map, mainly because we were forced to use the Pen tool to remove sleeves and arms before we started.

Blend modes Even the most perfect displacement map turns images into nothing more than misshapen versions of their original without the assistance of layer blend modes, which help bind the foreground layer to the background. Likewise, however, blend modes alone don't provide the necessary bumps and crumples that displacement maps supply, so the two work perfectly in unison.

Original logo The transfer on his T-shirt started life as nothing more than a three-colour GIF image. The background colour being white helped us out, but we could combat this fairly easily if we had to. Before applying the displacement map, we resized and rotated the image. Even then, we had to remove parts of the logo, otherwise the tennis player would have had an unrealistic blue tattoo.

Tip

Don't move it

Remember, displacement maps work only if you keep the shape affected in the same place. The Displace filter alters the shape based on the area of the background image it occupies, so moving the shape afterwards might create pretty effects but it won't generate a realistic texture.

Using the Displace filter

How to apply displacement maps

It's no good creating the perfect displacement map if you don't have a clue what to do with it. We show you how to apply displacement maps to your images.

01 The setup Here we have the image basics. At the top, the background wall with the text on an additional layer; at the bottom, our displacement map of the wall. This is all we need, so go to Filter> Distort>Displace.

02 The settings You'll now see this window. We needn't bother with the bottom buttons in this instance, as our displacement map was created using a layer within the main image, so they are both the same size.

03 Scale it up Now enter dimensions for the horizontal and vertical scale of the displacement. The best way here is usually trial and error – using the Undo function, you can try various values to achieve the best results.

Fluttering flags

Two methods to choose from

There are two different ways to create a fluttering flag. The version at the top of the picture on the right has been fashioned using a similar method to the T-shirt and graffiti effects – using a curtain as a starting point. The version at the bottom uses a simple gradient fill as a displacement map, as shown in the middle of the image. Displacement maps only recognise shades of black and white, so a gradient moving from black through white several times will apply several bumps and waves to the image.

Bevelled edges

Gouge out parts of the background

Effects like this one use the same principles. The only real difference is the foreground layer uses Layer Styles for a bevelled look. Apply an outer bevel with a Hard Chisel setting plus an inner shadow; make the fill percentage in the Layers panel 25% to remove most inner parts of the foreground. Apply the Displacement filter of the background – and that's it.

Tip

Getting started

Photoshop has some displacement maps in the Plug-ins folder. They're small images, so pick the Tile setting when you apply the Displace filter.

Get creative with layer masks

Chocoholics will love this tutorial inspired by an ad campaign. Using layer masks, you can make bubble portraits from digital photos

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

- BRUSH CREATION
- LAYER MASKS
- ADJUSTMENT LAYERS

Have you felt the bubbles melt yet? A while ago, Aero produced a memorable TV ad for its chocolate bars, where a woman's face magically appeared from a cloud of chocolate bubbles. That image served as inspiration for this project, presenting a real challenge to devise a technique that enables the same effect to be applied to still, two-dimensional images.

The technique requires two Photoshop devices. First, we need to create a custom brush that lets us paint with bubbles. Because Photoshop brushes operate on a greyscale basis in relation to opacity, by creating a brush with a hard black outline and a centre filled with very light grey, we can produce one which has an opaque outline and a semi-transparent inner. We can create it simply by designing the brush footprint within Photoshop itself.

But there's more to this technique than simply stamping bubbles here and there. We need a way for the original image to show through and meld with these bubble-shaped brush marks, and for that we need the power of layer masks. By applying a layer mask to the target image layer and painting directly onto the mask, we can subtly reveal the associated image layer with varying degrees of opacity.

There's a certain amount of intuition needed here when it comes to actually placing the individual bubbles. We have to concentrate lots of smaller bubbles around the main features in the face, surrounding these with larger bubbles which are not quite so opaque, over the less important surrounding areas.

So, grab the starter image and indulge in the ultimate chocolate fantasy, with a little help from Photoshop!

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
40 minutes

YOUR EXPERT
Tim Shelbourne

ON THE CD
Starter image

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP CS AND ABOVE

Expert Tip

Saving brushes

Once you've created your custom bubble brush, it's added to the brush set currently loaded in the Brush Picker. Although the brush will remain in this brush set for as long as it's loaded, the next time you choose another brush set, your custom brush will be lost unless you save it. To save the brush set, including your custom brushes, choose Save Brushes from the pop-up menu in the Brush Picker. Give your brush set a meaningful name and click OK.

BLOW THE FIRST BUBBLE

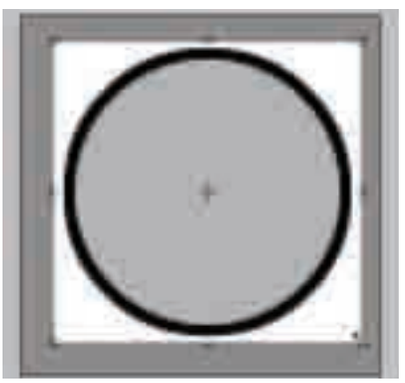
Set up the brush

01 New document For this project, we need to create a couple of custom brushes to paint the bubbles with. It's very easy to create such a thing. Go to File>New. From the Preset choose Custom. Change the measurement units to Pixels and enter 1000 for the height and width.

02 A blank canvas Now change the resolution units to Pixels/Inch and enter 300 for Resolution. Choose RGB for Color Mode and White for the background. Click OK to create the new file. Now use the Zoom tool to zoom into the blank document a little. Ensure that your foreground colour is black.

03 Circular selection Choose the Elliptical Marquee tool from the toolbar. In the Options bar, choose Fixed Aspect Ratio for Style. Set Feather to 0 pixels. Now drag a circular selection slightly smaller than the area of the blank document.

04 Fill and Stroke Now go to Edit>Fill. Choose Black for the contents and enter 10% for the Opacity. Hit OK to fill the selection. With the selection still active, go to Edit>Stroke. Enter 10 for Stroke Width and choose black for Color, Outside for Location. Leave the opacity set to 100%. Hit OK to apply the stroke. Go to Select>Deselect.



05 Crop Choose the Crop tool and drag a crop box around the circle. Leave a little space around the outside of the circle. Now press Enter in order to crop.

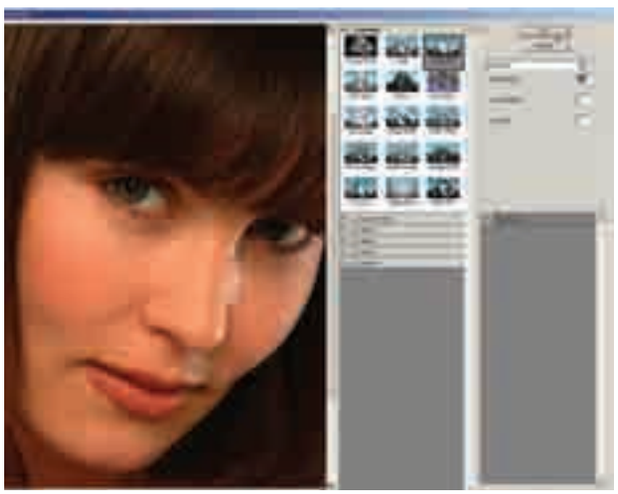
06 Define Brush Preset To save your new brush, go to Select>All. Now go to Edit>Define Brush Preset. Name your brush 'Bubble 1' and click OK. Your new brush will be available from the currently loaded brush set in the Brush Picker. You can now close this file without saving it.

07 Increase canvas size Open the 'Bubble_start.jpg'. Make the background layer editable by double-clicking it in the Layers palette. Go to Image>Canvas Size. Change the measurement units to Percent and check the Relative box. Enter 30 for both the height and width. Click OK to extend the canvas.

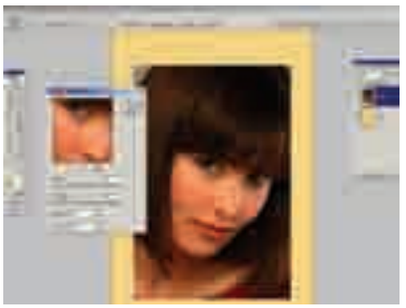
08 Filled layer Hold down the Ctrl/Cmd key and click the New Layer icon at the base of the Layers palette to add a new layer below the current one. Click the Foreground Color swatch and choose a light cream colour from the Picker. Go to Edit>Fill, choose Foreground Color for the contents. Enter 100% for the opacity. Hit Enter to fill the layer.

START TO APPLY THE EFFECT

Bring the photo to life

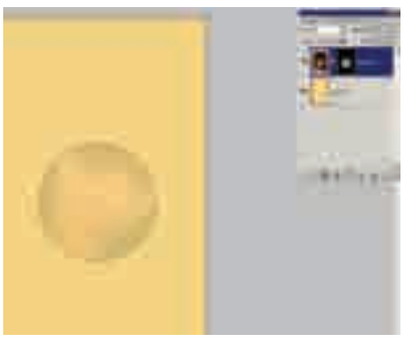


09 Filter fun Return to the image layer in the Layers palette and go to Filter>Artistic>Dry Brush. Set Brush Size to 10, Brush Detail to 0, Texture to 1. Click OK. Go to Image>Adjustments> Posterize. Enter 17 for Levels and click OK.



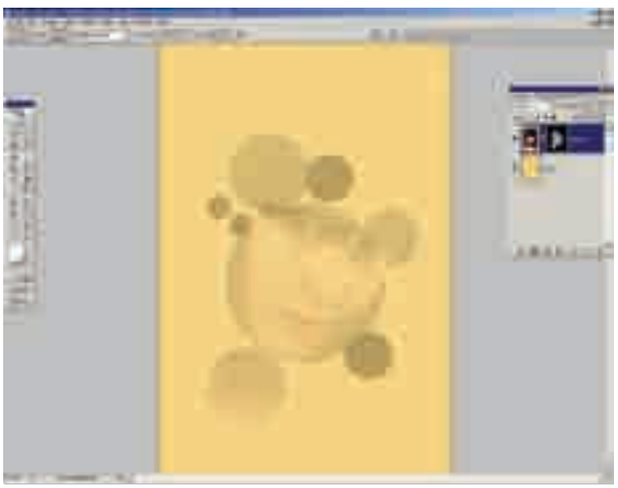
10 Smart Blur and Layer Mask Go to Filter>Blur>Smart Blur. Set Radius to 33, Threshold to 93, Quality to High and Mode to Normal. Click OK to apply the filter. Reduce the opacity of this layer to 29%. If you haven't got CS2, do a normal blur. Now add a layer mask via Layer>Layer Mask>Hide All.

11 Choose a brush Choose the Brush tool from the toolbar. Hit 'D' on the keyboard to revert to the default foreground/ background colours. Click the Background Color swatch and choose a mid grey from the Color Picker. From the Brush Picker, choose the biggest hard round brush (from the Basic set).



12 First bubbles Click directly on the thumbnail for the layer mask in the Layers palette. Hit X to swap your foreground/ background colours so that grey is to the fore. Now, with the brush at a very large size (1000 pixels) click once in the centre of the girl's face.

13 More bubbles Click again on the layer mask. Reduce the size of the brush a little and click another three or four smaller circles around the large one. Swap your colours again so that white is to the fore (X) and click a few more circles of various sizes with the brush.



14 Custom brush Now, from the Brush Picker choose the Bubble brush you made earlier. Ensure that white is to the fore and begin to add some smaller bubbles around the main features in the face. To make the bubbles more opaque, simply click a number of times in the same place.

15 Vary the size You need to adjust the size of the brush as you go, to roughly match the size of the features you're placing bubbles over. Adjust the brush size by using the square bracket keys on the keyboard. Continue to add bubbles here and there throughout, to break the image up further.

Tool School

Modify the brush size

In this project, we need to change the size of the brush a lot. Although you can adjust the size of your brush with the slider in the Brush Picker, it can be fairly tedious to do it via this method. Fortunately, Photoshop has a keyboard shortcut for adjusting brush size, and this involves using the square bracket keys. Located next to the Enter key, you use the right-facing bracket key for increasing the size of the brush, and the left-facing bracket for reducing its size.

Alert!

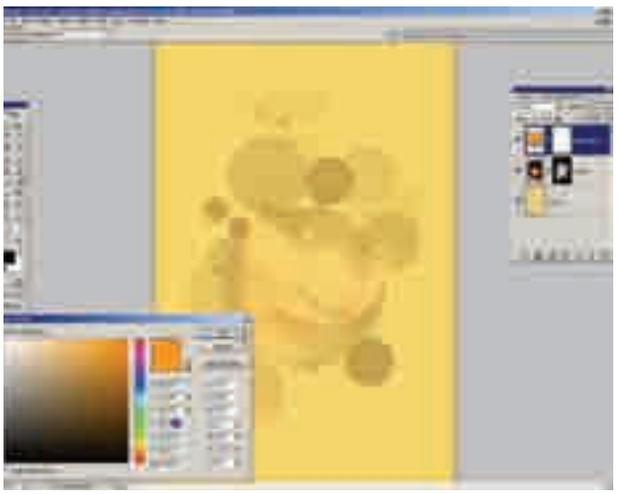
Target layer masks

It's vital in this project that you paint onto the layer masks and not the image layers. To do this, you must be sure that you're working on the layer mask itself and not the associated image layer. To be sure of this, before you begin to paint you must click directly on the thumbnail for the layer mask in the Layers palette. You can check that you're working on the mask itself by checking for a bold outline around the outside of the layer mask thumbnail.

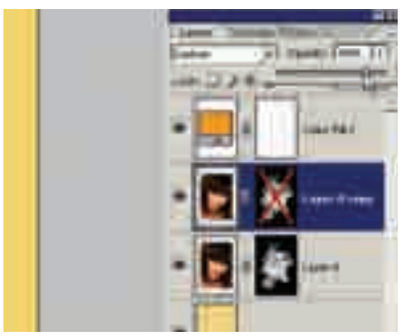
BRING OUT THE FEATURES

Make the bubble girl come to life

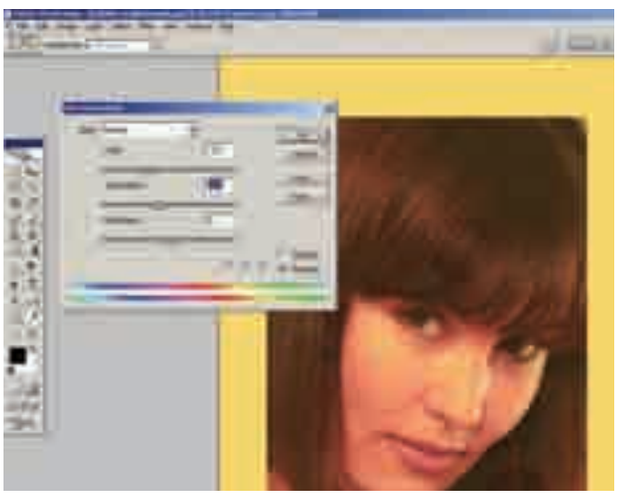
16 Bubbles on the mask By clicking bubbles into the mask with black as your foreground colour, you can add some empty bubbles here and there. Continue to add lots of bubbles, using white at the fore. It's worth taking your time to create detail. You can see the layer mask in isolation in the screengrab above, showing the bubbles applied to it.



17 Solid colour layer Go to Layer> New Fill Layer>Solid Color. Choose a vibrant yellow/orange from the Color Picker and click OK. Now set the blending mode for this layer to Overlay, and set the layer opacity to 22%.



18 Duplicate layer Click the main image layer and choose Duplicate Layer. Right/Ctrl-click the layer mask for this duplicate layer and choose Disable Layer Mask. In the Layers palette, set the layer blending mode to Darken and the layer opacity to 80%.



19 Hue/ Saturation Click on the image thumbnail for this layer and go to Image> Adjustments>Hue/ Saturation. Drag the Hue slider to the left to a value of -31. Set the Saturation slider to -15. Click the layer mask thumbnail again to enable it and go to Edit>Fill, choosing black for Contents.

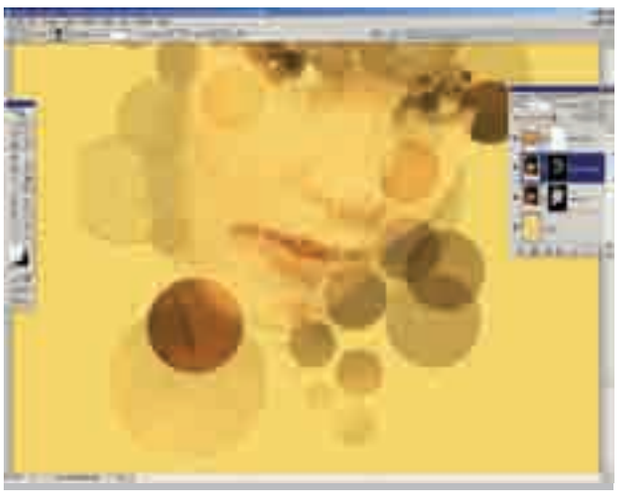
20 Click in the eyes Zoom into the eyes. Choose the Brush tool again and select a large, hard round brush from the Picker. Ensure your foreground colour is white. In the Options bar, set the brush opacity to 50%. Now begin to click some more bubbles around the eyes. Regularly modify your brush size, following the shape of the eyes.

21 Clarify the features For the eye iris, adjust the size of the brush to fit and click in both irises. The more you click in one place, the more intense the tones within the bubble will be. Now you can continue to add bubbles here and there over the facial features to delineate the face. It's vital to vary the size and spacing of the bubbles as you go.

22 Paint in the lips Use the same technique you used on the eyes to delineate the mouth. Overlap a few semi-opaque bubbles and click in a few more opaque, smaller bubbles here and there to break up the line of the lips. Remember, we want to create an impression here rather than a photographic image.

TIP | WHEN APPLYING BUBBLES TO A PHOTO OF A PERSON, IT'S GOOD TO MAKE SURE THE MAIN FEATURES (EYES, MOUTH ETC) CAN BE SEEN. OTHERWISE YOU'LL HAVE A BUBBLY MESS!

BLOW IT UP
Introduce larger bubbles

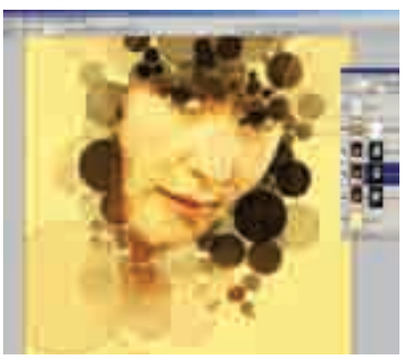


23 Larger bubbles Use larger bubbles around the outer area of the image, as we want to concentrate attention on the main features. It's worth taking your time to add lots of bubbles, some overlapping and some in isolation. Vary the opacity of the brush as you go by adjusting it in the Options bar.

24 Bubble-mania! From the Brush Picker, choose the Bubble brush you created earlier. Set the brush opacity to 100% in the Options bar. Now, still working on the layer mask, add some more bubbles using this brush. Again, control the intensity of the bubbles by clicking in the same place a few times.

25 Intensify with a duplicate Go to Layer>Duplicate Layer. In the Layers palette, set the blending mode for this duplicate layer to Hard Light and then set the Opacity slider to 67%.

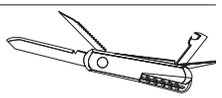
26 Painted bubbles Click on the Color Fill layer and add a new layer. Hold down the Alt/Option key to sample one of the lighter bubble colours from the image. Reduce the brush opacity to 50% in the Options bar and now add a few larger bubbles to this new layer.



27 Paint on image layers If the edges of the image itself have given some of the outer bubbles a flat side, simply click on the appropriate image layer and use a soft brush to paint in some dark brown colour to correct them.

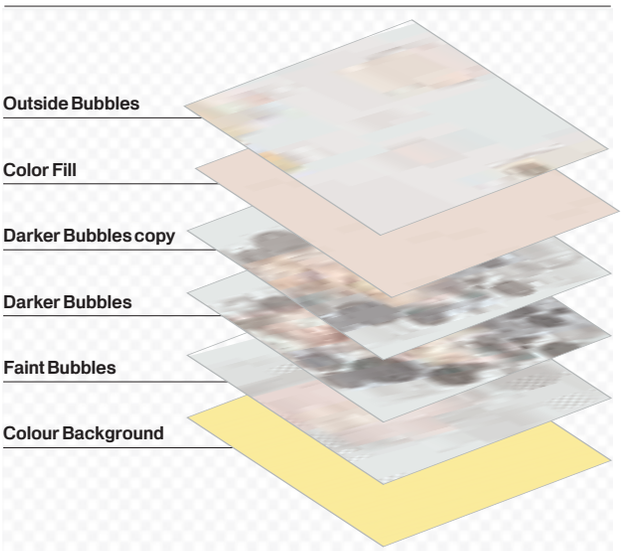
28 Flatten and save Finally, once you're happy with the image, go to Layer>Flatten Image before saving as a TIF or JPEG file via File>Save As.

Tool tip
Dodging and burning



Because layer masks operate on a greyscale basis, you can use the Dodge and Burn tools to modify the intensity of bubbles. Ensure you're working on the layer mask, and use the Dodge or Burn tool to lighten or darken individual bubbles. Dodge lightens and Burn darkens the tones selected in the Options bar. Control the strength of these tools via the Exposure slider. Select Midtones in the Range option and brush over your chosen bubbles.

The layer structure
Beneath the froth



FOCUS ON COMPOSITION

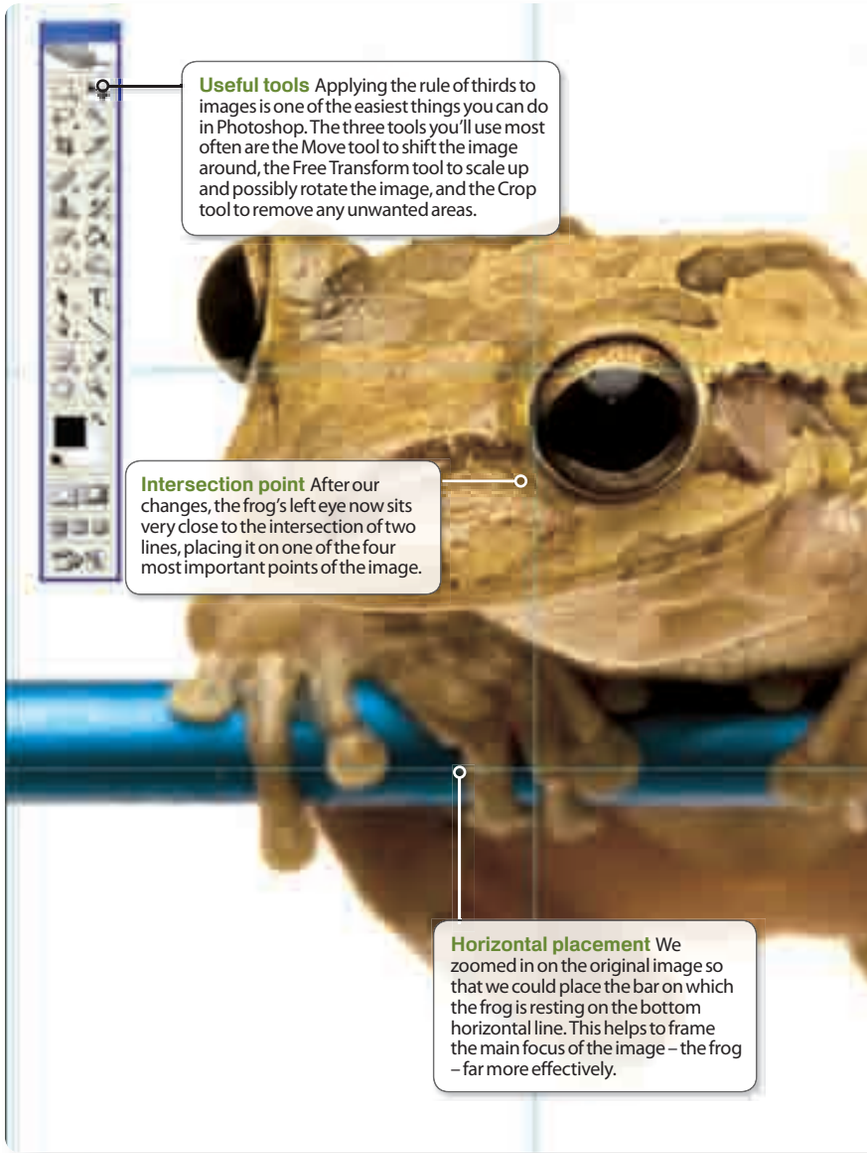
Rule of thirds

Discover a photographic principle that can turn the plainest image into a professional-looking shot

Most professional photographers spend years trying to achieve perfection, so it's understandably difficult for the rest of us to stand up every time, camera in hand, and feel confident that our next snap will be something wonderful. Thankfully, there are a few straightforward principles we can all follow that promise to at least point us in the right direction of better pictures.

The rule of thirds has been around longer than photography itself, and relates to framing images in the most aesthetically pleasing way. It involves dividing the shot into an imaginary noughts and crosses grid, and trying to place key areas on lines and intersections. As you'll see below, a good example is the landscape shot, where the horizon sits on either horizontal line, or a portrait shot, where the eyes rest perfectly on the top horizontal line. Similarly, placing the main focal point to line up with one of the vertical lines makes for a more interesting shot, purely because it's much more pleasing to the eye.

That's all well and good for your future photos, but what about your vast digital image collection that you've spent years amassing? Worry not, for you can very easily breathe life into the most pallid and turgid photo by applying the rule of thirds in Photoshop. Read on to see how…



Useful tools Applying the rule of thirds to images is one of the easiest things you can do in Photoshop. The three tools you'll use most often are the Move tool to shift the image around, the Free Transform tool to scale up and possibly rotate the image, and the Crop tool to remove any unwanted areas.

Intersection point After our changes, the frog's left eye now sits very close to the intersection of two lines, placing it on one of the four most important points of the image.

Horizontal placement We zoomed in on the original image so that we could place the bar on which the frog is resting on the bottom horizontal line. This helps to frame the main focus of the image – the frog – far more effectively.

Focal point

Middle of the road isn't always good

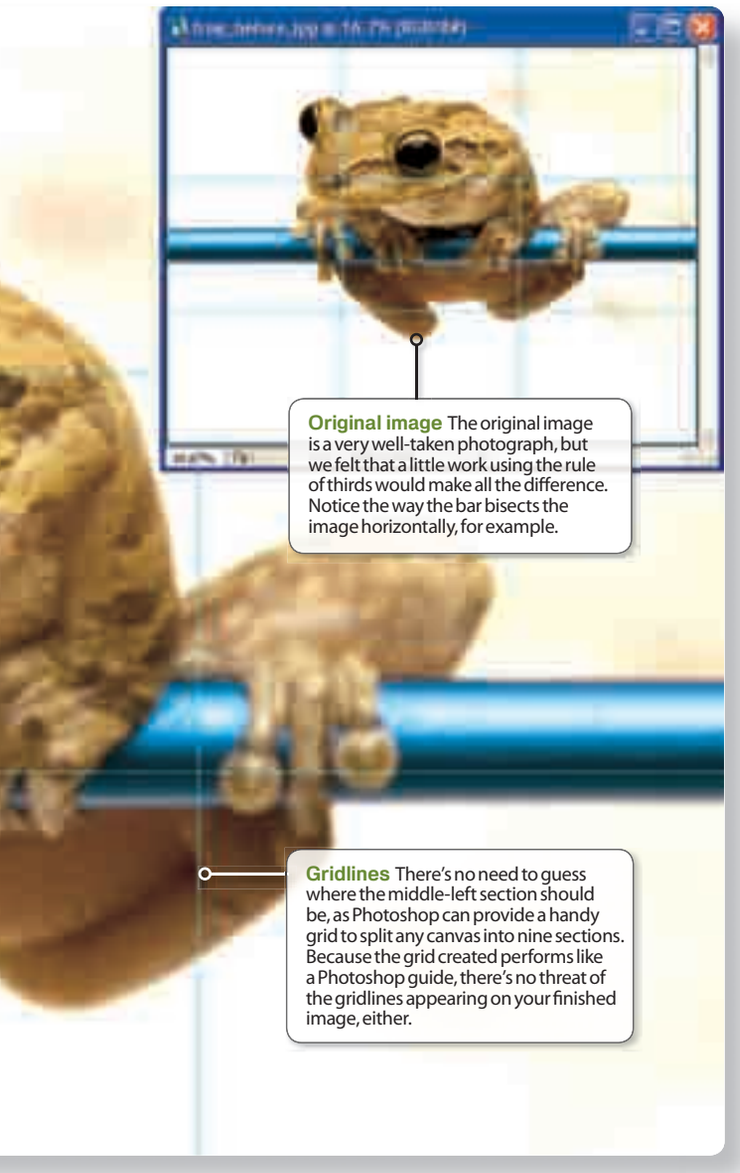
In the original image (inset), the lighthouse was in the middle with the horizon halfway up. We moved everything left and downwards to have the lighthouse resting on the bottom-left 'action' intersection point. The horizon now sits on the bottom line as well. Doing this creates a problem, however – unless you can dramatically crop to remove extraneous sections, moving everything will result in a huge gap at the top-right. Our solution was, using the Free Transform tool, to scale the image up slightly, removing the dreaded blank

space. Remember, though, that you can't use this option too much or you'll end up with a pixelated mess.

Top and bottom

Position for perfect framing

For busy images such as this one, the rule of thirds can help viewers make their way through the mass of content to find the most pertinent aspects. Notice that the tops of the buildings and the river bank are very close to the horizontal lines, helping frame the central section of the image. Also, the boat is very close to the bottom-right action point, offering a good focal point. We've used the Crop and Move tools (both available in the main toolbar) in the smaller version to show how the image could look without the rule of thirds.



Original image The original image is a very well-taken photograph, but we felt that a little work using the rule of thirds would make all the difference. Notice the way the bar bisects the image horizontally, for example.

Gridlines There's no need to guess where the middle-left section should be, as Photoshop can provide a handy grid to split any canvas into nine sections. Because the grid created performs like a Photoshop guide, there's no threat of the gridlines appearing on your finished image, either.

Tip

Store the rule

We've shown how to create a grid and apply the rule of thirds, but the key is to use the rule when taking photos in future. It becomes second nature pretty quickly, and you can turn the principle into an innate ability to root out the best pics.

Tip

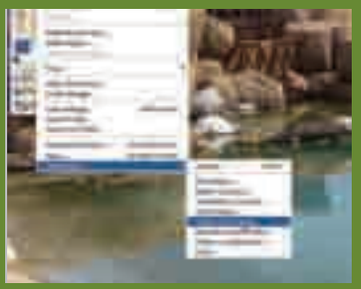
Golden mean

If you find the rule of thirds less than challenging, you may fancy grappling with the golden mean theory. This is a ratio based on the number phi (1.618), and includes everything from golden rectangles to the Fibonacci sequence. See **www.flickr.com/groups/golden_rectangle**.

The perfect grid

Create a 3 x 3 grid in seconds

Editing images in Photoshop using the rule of thirds requires one important element – a grid to help you place and move the image to the optimum position…



01 Find Preferences You don't have to draw a grid from scratch – Photoshop does it automatically. To achieve this, go to Edit> Preferences and in the submenu click Guides> Rules and Slices to enter the grid settings.

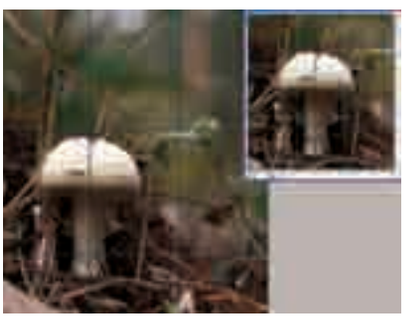
02 Set up the grid In the Grid setting, change Color to Cyan, Style to Lines and Gridline to 33.33%, so the canvas is divided into thirds horizontally and vertically. Keep Subdivisions at 1 – any value over this will give us more than nine squares.

03 Turn it on Hit OK, and you'll see… nothing. We must turn it on to see it, so go to View>Show>Grid and you'll see your 3 x 3 grid. Even better, when you open an image, no matter the aspect ratio, Photoshop will always give a perfect 3 x 3 grid.

Side focus

The art of vertical framing

The rule of thirds doesn't only apply to horizontal areas. The image on the right of a mushroom uses the rule to place the focal point in the left third, with the head and stalk appearing very close to critical action points. Creating a portrait-shaped image like this one can be a good idea if you have a landscape photo that doesn't hit the heights – simply crop the relevant area, and you can tell everybody that's how you took the picture in the first place.



Breaking rules

Some images are best left alone

We've chosen the image on the right to show you how you don't have to follow the rules religiously to achieve great results. The larger version has been modified to place the horizon close to the top line, framing the three men in the top third. It also sets the two bowls in the distance very near the two top action points. However, although the original doesn't adhere to the rule of thirds, it may still be better. For example, the sky above the three men works more effectively in the original.

Winter
Wonderland

KEY SKILLS COVERED
What you'll learn

- GLASS EFFECTS
- THE SPHERIZE FILTER
- CREATING A WOODEN BASE
- PRODUCING BRUSHES FROM IMAGES

Create a winter wonderland

We shake it up a bit and show you how to produce a fun, festive sphere in time for Christmas…

Christmas is just around the corner, so what could be a more relevant creative project than making a snow globe featuring a festive winter scene? Even if you're not in the Christmas mood, you can use the techniques to suit a variety of other projects, such as creating bubbles or even mystical crystal balls.

Perhaps you would like to place yourself, friends and family within the sphere and make it into the feature of the front of your Christmas cards. You could even use your Photoshop wizardry and photo-manipulation skills to create the effect that the snow globe is being held in your hand.

One of the key elements of this creation is glass, which can be quite a tricky effect to master properly. However, with a little will, determination and tweaking of layer styles and blending modes, you can achieve the perfect glassy orb. The most important thing to remember is that it will distort whatever is inside or behind the globe, but do not fear, as Photoshop comes equipped with filters that are perfectly suited to the job.

We've highlighted how easy it is to vary what you place in your snow globe, but you can also personalise it by engraving your own message into the front of the wooden stand.

Follow our steps to magic up a wintry world, complete with fairy lights, a cute little cottage and Christmas trees… your very own winter wonderland!

LAY THE FOUNDATIONS
Draw your globe

essentials

SKILL LEVEL
Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN
One hour

YOUR EXPERT
Zoe Mutter

ON THE CD
Tree, house and wood files

01 Sizing it up Create a new document at 300ppi measuring 29cm high and 24cm wide. Create a new layer and then choose the Elliptical Marquee tool. In the Style drop-down menu in the Options bar, choose Fixed Size. Enter 17cm in the Width box and 17cm in the Height box.

02 Fill your marquee Click in the document for a marquee to appear. Click on the colour swatch and choose a pale blue similar to ours. Now choose the Paint Bucket tool and click in the marquee to fill it with the light blue colour.

03 Give your flare the polar effect Create another new layer and use the Rectangular Marquee tool to drag around the area of the circle. Choose Edit>Fill and then select 50% grey from the Use pull-down menu. Choose Filter>Render>Lens Flare. Position the flare in the upper left corner. Set the Brightness to 100% and Lens Type to 50-300mm Zoom. Click OK.

WORKS WITH | PHOTOSHOP 7.0 AND ABOVE AND PHOTOSHOP ELEMENTS 4.0 AND ABOVE

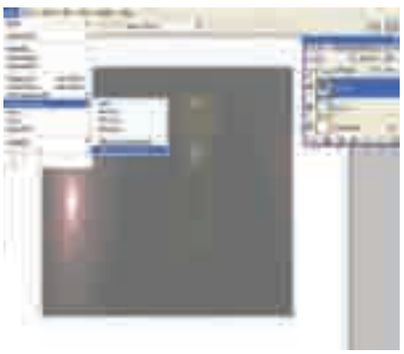
Tip

Crafty ideas

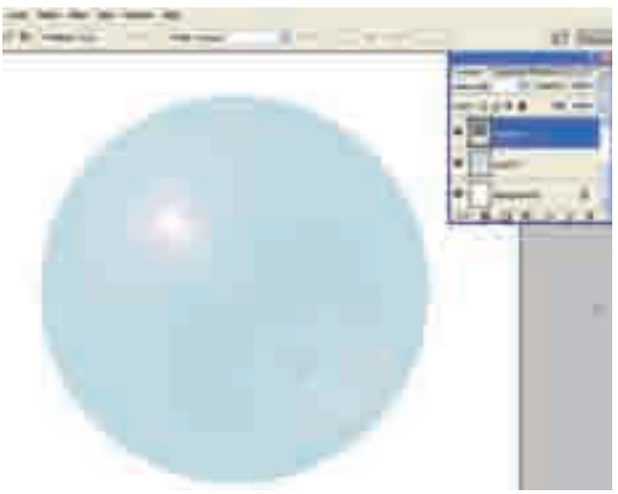
In this tutorial we show you how to create a Christmas scene, but there is no limit to the images you can place inside your snow globe. Why not add a personal touch to your orb and try and rebuild an area near where you live, taking elements such as trees and buildings as we have and distorting them inside the glass. Then all you need is the snow to transform it.

SET THE SCENE

Start on the background



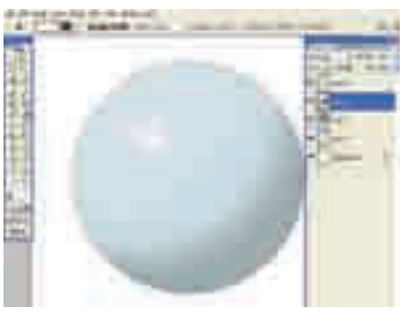
04 Flip the flare Ctrl/Cmd-click the top layer thumbnail to make a selection and choose Filter>Distort>Polar Coordinates. Choose Polar to Rectangular and click OK. Select Image>Rotate Canvas>Flip Canvas Vertical.



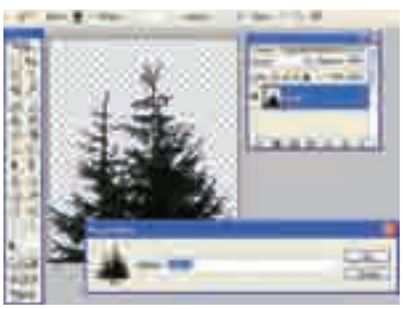
05 Shiny sphere Ctrl/Cmd-click the thumbnail of the top layer to select it. Choose Filter>Distort>Polar Coordinates. Choose Rectangular to Polar. Click OK. Set the top layer's blending mode to Hard Light. Now Ctrl/Cmd-click the two top layers and use the Move tool to position them at the top of the canvas.

06 Make it slightly hazy Create a new layer. Ctrl/Cmd-click the base blue layer thumbnail to create a selection. Click the colour swatch and enter R 219, G 226 and B 225 in the Color Picker. Choose the Paint Bucket tool. Click inside the marquee to fill it. Change the opacity to 24% and make sure it's at the top of the palette.

07 Select and then shade Ctrl/Cmd-click the thumbnail of the layer you just created, making a round selection. Create a new layer at the top of the layer stack. Now choose the Gradient tool and click on the swatch in the Options bar. Choose the Black/White preset in the Gradient Editor. Move the white stop left as we have done. Click OK.



08 Give your globe dimension Check Reverse in the Options bar. Click and drag from left of the middle towards the bottom right of the marquee selection. Place this new layer below the hazy top layer. Change the blending mode of the layer to Hard Light and the opacity to 23%.



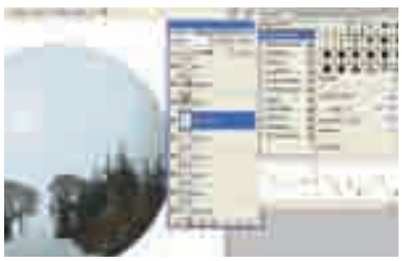
09 Create tree brushes Label your layers to make it easier to identify them. We called ours 'Haze', 'Shading', 'Shine' and 'Blue Base'. Create a new layer above the Blue Base layer and call it 'Trees'. Open 'trees 1.psd' from the disc. Choose Edit>Define Brush Preset and enter 'Trees 1' as the brush name.

10 Paint in the nature Return to your snow globe document. Pick the Brush tool and set your foreground colour to black. Click the arrow beside the Brush heading in the Options bar. Scroll to the bottom of the list where you'll see your 'Trees 1' brush. Click in the document to see a tree appear on the new layer.

11 Three-second forest We set our brush size to nearly 500px and started to build up the forest on the Trees layer. Repeat step nine to create brushes with the other four tree images on the disc. Use the brush at different sizes to make the trees more random and create the different types of trees on separate layers.

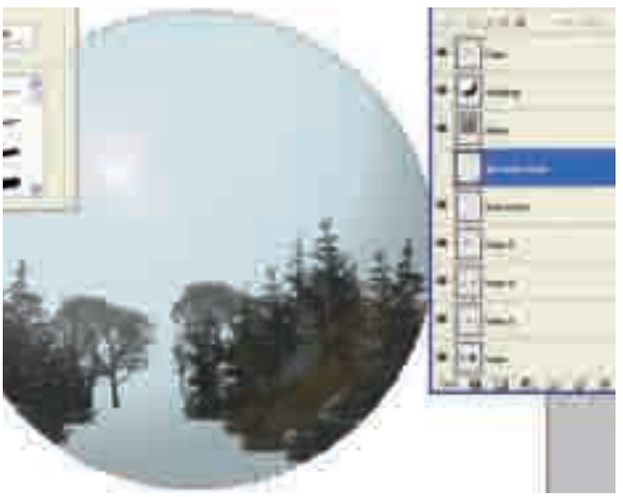
LET IT SNOW

Create a chilly landscape



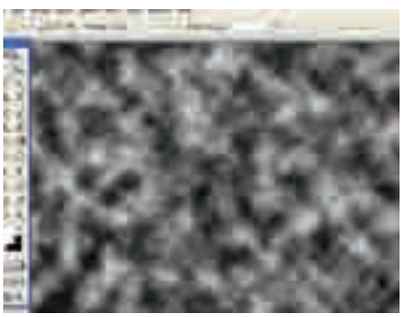
12 A light scattering of snow Set your brush back to Normal. Choose a round brush, Size 5px. In the Brush palette click the Brush Tip Shape tab. Enter Spacing of 500%. Under Scattering set Count Jitter and Scatter sliders to Maximum. Create a new layer called 'Tree Snow'. Set white as your colour and paint over areas of the trees, creating light snow. If you use Elements, see the side tip.

13 Adjust your brush settings Create a new layer called 'Ground Snow'. Now choose the Brush tool, turn the Scattering off in the Brush palette and reduce the Spacing. Set the foreground colour to white. Choose a soft round brush of around 280px, making sure that Hardness is set to Minimum.

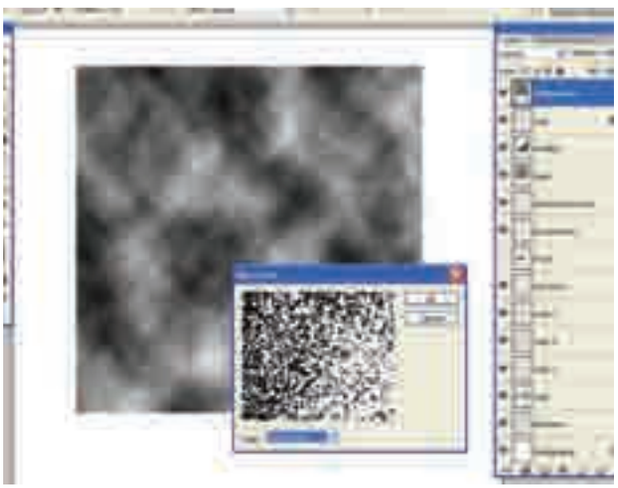


14 Snowy outlook Ctrl/Cmd-click the Haze layer thumbnail to make a selection. Paint snow into the bottom of the Ground Snow layer so that the trees look as though they are in the snow instead of floating.

15 Turn up the texture Make sure the Ground Snow layer is selected and go to Layer>Duplicate Layer. Make sure this is above Ground Snow in the Layers palette. With the Ground Snow Copy selected, go to Filter>Texture>Texturizer. Choose a Texture of Sandstone, Scaling of 50%, Relief of 4 and Light of Bottom Right. Finally, click on OK.



16 Turn clouds into snow Create a new layer and call it 'Falling Snow'. Make the foreground colour white and the background colour black. Now choose Filter>Render>Clouds. Use the Rectangular Marquee to select a small area of this where there is a lot of contrast between black and white.



17 Make it dotty Choose Select> Inverse and hit Delete to be left with a small section of clouds. Now choose Edit>Free Transform and drag the handles so that the cloud selection fills the area of the globe again. Choose Filter> Pixellate>Mezzotint and select Coarse Dots from the Type drop-down menu.

18 Create your snow storm Choose the Magic Wand tool and click on an area of black to select it on the Falling Snow layer. Choose Select>Similar for all areas of black to be selected as well. Hit Delete to be left with white speckles. Reduce the opacity of this layer to 70%.

Tip

Light scattering or snow storm?

The key to changing the intensity of your snow is in the layers. If you want heavier snow, duplicate your original Falling Snow layer multiple times. You can then alter the opacities of the layers to change the snow's appearance

Tip

Photoshop Elements

Although most of this tutorial works in all versions of Photoshop, there are occasions where Elements users will come up short. But there are alternatives, as we show here…

In step 12, we talk about dynamic brush options. There are limited options in Elements –with the Brush tool selected, click the More Options part of the top toolbar.

In step 28 we use the Warp tool. Use the distort options.

In step 33 we copy and paste a layer style. Simply use the same settings as before.

Finally, step 34 uses the Pen tool. Use the Magnetic Lasso tool.

Tool School

Colour your wood

You can easily change the colour of the wood sample we have given you on the disc. Just select the layer the wood is on and then choose Image>Adjustments>Hue/Saturation. Check Colorize and then experiment with the Hue, Saturation and Lightness sliders until you have the desired colour.

Tip

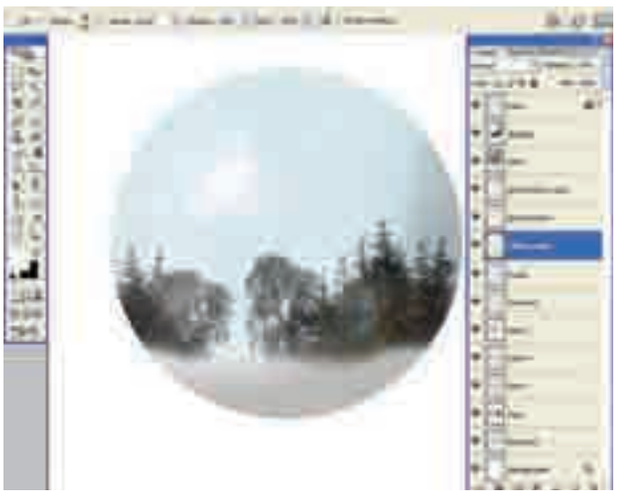
Form a group

It can get confusing when you're working on a document with many layers. This is made easier by labelling your layers, but can also be made more manageable by introducing layer groups. Click on the Create a New Group icon in the Layers palette and then drag similar layers into it. For example, you could create a group called 'Lights' which includes all of your different coloured light layers.

CHRISTMAS COTTAGE

Add the house and the wooden stand

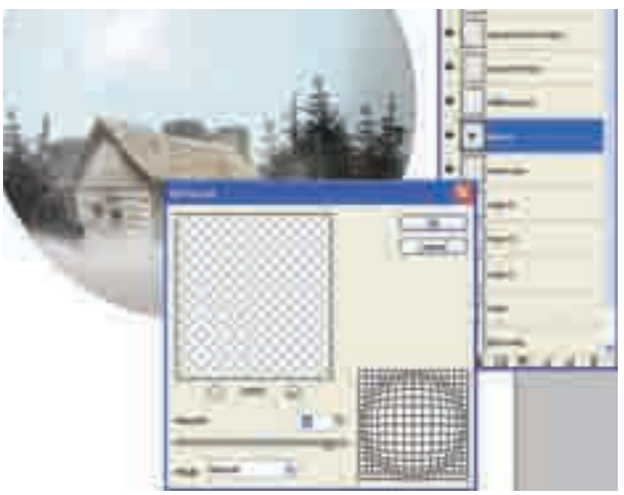
19 Let the house show through Choose the Eraser tool on a low Hardness setting and 50% opacity. Rub away some falling snow from the ground. Reduce the opacity further and rub away sections from the falling snow in the sky. Choose Filter>Blur>Motion Blur and set Angle to -54 and Distance to 4 pixels.



20 Remove overspill Reduce the Haze layer's opacity to 10% and move the Falling Snow layer below the Ground Snow layer, to make the blue stronger. We also rubbed away more of the falling snow. Ctrl/Cmd-click the Haze layer thumbnail and choose Select>Inverse. Click the Falling Snow layer and hit Delete to remove white around the outside of the globe. Repeat for the Shine layer.

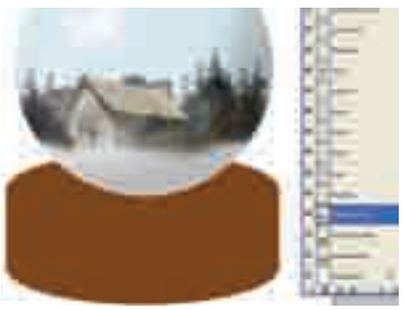
21 Add the cottage Open up the image 'house.psd' from the disc. Select the Move tool, click on the house and drag it to your snow globe document. Place the layer the house is on under the Falling Snow layer and call it 'House'. Choose Edit>Transform>Flip Horizontal. We also used Free Transform to make it slightly taller.

22 Realistic distortions Ctrl/Cmd-click the Haze layer thumbnail to create a round selection. Click the House layer and choose Filter>Distort>Spherize. Reduce Amount to 80% and click OK. You may need to use Edit>Free Transform to adjust the size slightly, and then your house should look as though it's being distorted by the glass.



23 Place the globe on a stand Create a layer called 'Wood Base Top' above the background layer. Pick the Elliptical Marquee tool. Select Fixed Size as the style, enter 18cm as the width and 5cm as the height. Click the document for a marquee to appear. Click in the middle and drag to position it as we have. Fill it with brown.

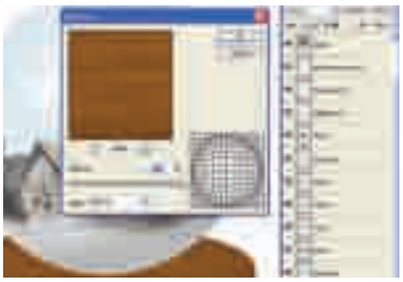
24 Build up the stand side Create a new layer below Wood Base Top called 'Wood Base Side'. Choose the Rectangular Marquee tool and set the style to Fixed Size. Enter 18cm as the width and 5cm as the height. Click in the document for a marquee to appear, then click and drag it where we have. Fill it with brown.



25 Incorporate the wood texture Click on the Wood Base Top layer and duplicate the layer. Move it below Wood Base Top and call it 'Wood Base Bottom'. Open up 'wood.jpg' from the disc and copy and paste it to your snow globe document. Place the layer above Wood Base Top and call it 'Wood Texture'.

SPRUCE UP THE GLOBE

A few clever techniques



26 Distort the wood grain Ctrl/Cmd-click the Wood Base Top layer thumbnail to create a selection. Choose Select>Inverse. Click on the Wood Texture layer you just created and hit Delete. Ctrl/Cmd-click on the Wood Texture thumbnail, and then choose Filter>Distort>Spherize and set Amount to 100%. Repeat the filter again to distort the wood.

27 Combine into one base layer Paste the wood texture in again on another layer. Make sure it covers the bottom area of the stand. Call the layer 'Wood Texture 2' and move it below Wood Texture in the palette. Click Wood Base Bottom and Wood Base Side. Choose Layer>Merge Layers. Ctrl/Cmd-click the merged layer thumbnail. Choose Select>Inverse. Click the Wood Texture 2 layer and hit Delete.

28 Warped wood Click on Wood Texture 2 and choose Edit>Transform>Warp. Pull the middle handles on the right and left side up slightly. Click on the centre four handles one at a time (in the very middle of the wood) and pull them down slightly as we have done. This will curve your wood with the shape of the side panel.

29 Cast light onto the stand Turn off the visibility of Wood Base Bottom. Double-click on Wood Texture to bring up the Layer Style window. Click on Drop Shadow and enter: Distance: 19px, Spread: 6% and Size: 46px. Move the opacity to 41%.

30 Clever gradient technique Click Gradient Overlay in the Layer Styles. Click the Black/White swatch. Move the white colour stop to the middle. Click underneath the right side of the gradient to create a stop and make it black. Move the colour midpoint in the left side towards the middle. Set the mode to Soft Light, the opacity to 62% and the angle to 171.

31 Bendy trees Repeat the Drop Shadow layer style for Wood Texture 2 with a Distance of 20px, Spread of 10% and Size of 43px. Merge all of your tree layers. Ctrl/Cmd-click the thumbnail of Blue Base to create a selection. With your merged tree layer selected, choose Filter> Distort>Spherize, set Amount to 80% and hit OK.

32 Another base layer Choose the Magnetic Lasso tool. Go around just the front side of the wooden base slowly, so it picks up all edges. Choose Edit>Copy and Edit>Paste. Name the layer 'Top of Base' and move it to the top of the Layers palette. Use Edit>Free Transform to make it smaller and move it up with the Move tool as we have.

33 Move about the midpoints Choose Edit>Warp. Pull the corners round slightly so they curve round the globe. Paste the layer style from the other Wood Base layer to this layer. Double-click the Layer Style icon on the thumbnail for 'Top of Base'. Enter the Gradient Overlay area. Click the swatch and move the colour midpoint for the left side slightly to the left.

Tool School

Add some shading

You don't have to use the Layer Styles to create shadow. This can also be done using the Burn tool. Set the brush on a minimum Hardness setting and set the size to about 100px. This is perfect for going along the edge under the globe to produce shading along either side of the top section making up the wood base.

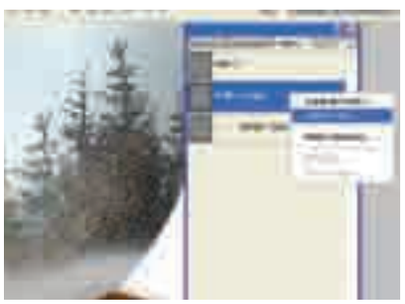
FINISHING TOUCHES

Polish the stand and add a touch of Christmas sparkle

34 Inscribe your stand Choose the Freeform Pen tool. Select Paths and check Magnetic in the Options bar. Go along the bottom edge of your wooden base and double-click at the end. Now choose the Type tool. Set the colour of the text to brownish grey, and pick a scripty font like Bickham Script Pro on Size 65pt.

35 The path to success With the Text tool selected, click the Centre Text button in the Options bar. Hover your cursor over the middle of the path until it changes, and then click to type your text. To move the text up, click on the end point of the path with the Move tool and drag to reposition it as we have.

36 It's all in the layer style Repeat this for the other word. Double-click on the Text layer and click on Inner Shadow in the Layer Style window. Enter a Distance and Size of 1px. In Bevel and Emboss change the Direction to Down, Size to 5px and Soften to 0px. Choose a Highlight mode colour of light brown similar to the one shown here.

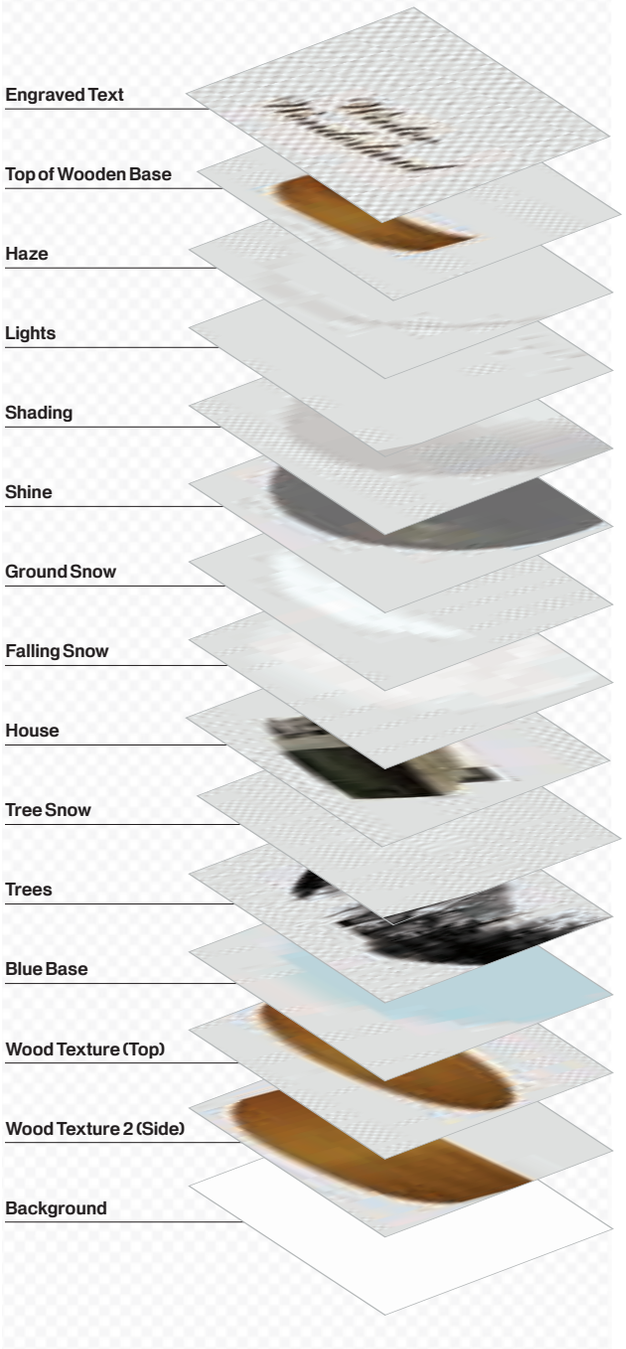


37 Overlay the colour Next, click on Color Overlay in the Layer Styles box, choose an opacity of 71% and then change the colour to a dark reddish brown. If you would like to get rid of your paths, select Window>Paths and then right-click on the Path layer and choose Delete Path.

38 Light up the place Create a new layer under Haze layer called 'Red Lights', with a blending mode of Hard Light. Choose a red colour. Select the Brush tool. Set Size to 30px and Hardness to minimum. Paint lights on the tree and house. Repeat for green, white and yellow lights. We set the other layers to the Vivid Light blending mode.

Layer structure

Digging beneath the snow



NEXT ISSUE | TURN PHOTOS INTO A T-SHIRT DESIGN AND PRINT TO FABRIC

eMag

Blow Up plug-in

Solving the problem of poor quality image enlargement...

essentials

SKILL LEVEL

Beginner
Intermediate
Expert

TIME TAKEN

10 minutes

YOUR EXPERT

Zoe Mutter

If you've ever tried enlarging small images for print using Photoshop, you may have encountered problems with quality and pixelation. Blow Up is a powerful plug-in that enables you to control the sharpness of your enlarged image and carry out the operation almost immediately. Using Blow Up, you can enlarge any image by up to four times its original size (1600% the area). Some types of image can even be increased by up to six times their size (3600% area).

The method Blow Up uses is superior to the bicubic interpolation used when Photoshop enlarges an image. Bicubic interpolation can cause a halo effect or jagged artefacts to appear on the image. This is avoided by using the Sharpness setting the plug-in offers to maintain crisp edges. Blow Up also enables you to add a slight amount of grain to solve the common problem of over-smoothing and blurring when enlarging images.

The difference between the two techniques of enlargement can be seen in our flower image which has been enlarged by the same amount using both methods. The Photoshop-enlarged example is less defined, and this blurring could have been avoided using Blow Up's Sharpen slider.

Other bonuses are that the plug-in can cope with blowing up layered images, and resizes the image in a new open window when you commit the scaling up action. It can also cope with 8-bit, 16-bit and 32-bit images in RGB, Greyscale, CMYK, LAB or Duotone mode without a problem.

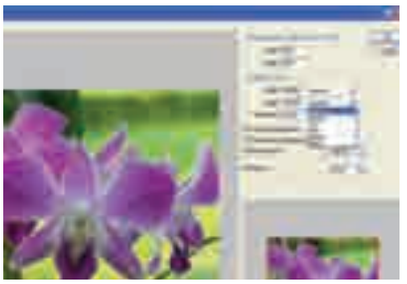
Visit **www.alienskin.com** for more info.

BLOW UP DOESN'T HAVE TO MEAN MUCK UP

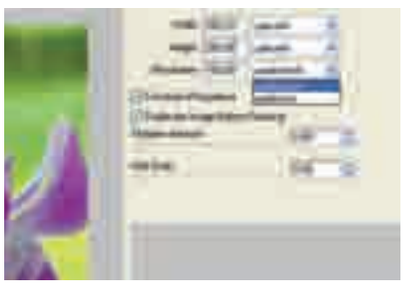
Carry out extreme enlargements while retaining all the sharpness

01 **Open the Dialog window** Place your Blow Up plug-in into the Photoshop Plug-ins folder. Now open the image you want to enlarge in Photoshop. To open the Blow Up Dialog window select File> Automate>Alien Skin Blow Up.

02 **Look familiar?** The resizing controls in Blow Up work in the same way as the Image Size dialog box in Photoshop, which makes it even easier to use. If you look at the Pixel Dimensions and Document Size boxes, you will notice that they look exactly the same as in Photoshop, and also use pull-down menus to determine the units used.



03 **Choose your enlargement** When using the resizing controls in Blow Up, you will first notice that the pixel dimensions are of the current image size. You can adjust the new image size using the Pixel Dimensions or Document Size control. We have chosen to use the Document Size and enlarge the image to 250%.



04 **The importance of resolution** For images that are to be printed, it's best to use the Document Size setting. As you will know from using Photoshop, a higher resolution means a better quality of image. This can be altered simply by entering a value into the Resolution box and then choosing between pixels/inch or pixels/cm.

05 **Enlarge in equal measures** If you check Constrain Proportions then the height of your image will be enlarged proportionally to the width. It's likely you will have this option checked when using the plug-in for most of your images.

06 **Protecting the original** Within the Blow Up dialog box there is a checkbox called Duplicate Image Before Resizing. With this option checked, a copy of your image will be made so you can experiment with enlarging one copy while protecting the original.

07 **Keep it sharp** The Sharpen Amount setting is used to rectify the softened edges which can occur during enlargement. Using the slider restores sharpness to strong edges. The method used is different to unsharp masking, as it's subtler, without creating unwanted elements such as halos. Use it with caution, because setting it too high can over-smooth your image.

08 **Grain can be great** When extreme enlargements of 200% or over take place, this can result in the image looking overly smooth and unrealistic. You can resolve this using the Add Grain control. However, you don't need to make this too harsh or it will ruin the image. The grain in the plug-in is monochromatic and only affects the luminance.

Expert Tip

Action stations

You can also record the operation of the Blow Up plug-in and play it back as you would any other Photoshop action. This means you can apply the plug-in's resizing effect quickly to a whole batch of images at once. All of the settings, such as Sharpen Amount and the Add Grain value, are recorded within the action.

Blow Up plug-in discount

Alien Skin has offered a 20% discount on Blow Up to readers. To receive your discount for the plug-in, which normally retails for £108, simply go to **www.alienskin.com/?affiliate=247623** to purchase the plug-in. This offer expires on 31 January 2007.

Advice

Visit the advice centre for help with fixing photos, solutions to your image-editing problems and directions to helpful destinations on the web

Your expert panel…

GEORGE CAIRNS
A Photoshop user for many years, George can tackle any problem

ZOE MUTTER
Zoe's a keen photographer and a whizz at fixing common flaws in images

JO COLE
The web is awash with helpful sites, and Jo brings you the best ones out there

What you'll find in this section

Q+A
Get to the bottom of your image-editing woes in this part

PHOTOFIX
Send us your problem shots for advice on making them all better

RESOURCES
We guide you to the best websites for tutorials and instruction in using the Photoshop software

Send your questions to…

Post you questions to *Photoshop Creative* Q&A, Imagine Publishing Ltd, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EZ.

Alternatively you can email us at **PCR@imagine-publishing.co.uk**.

Q+A

Let us sort out your image-editing quandaries

Master of disguise

Q I'm trying to upload photos to an online stock photo site and keep getting them rejected because I couldn't get the subject to sign a model release form. Is there a sneaky yet convincing way I can hide people's faces to get round this problem?
Alan Cornwell

A Online stock photo sites are growing all the time, and selling shots online can be a great way to earn some extra pocket money. If you have enough photos in your portfolio you can earn more money per month than you'd get from an ISA, for example. The best selling shots usually feature people – especially professionals going about their daily duties. Shots of professionals at work are easy to take if you've got a lovely long lens. You can snap your subject without them spotting you. Photographing a policeman on duty may be easy, but getting him to sign a model release form will be much trickier. You may be shooting a public event, and not be able to track down the dozens of people in shot to get their permission to use their likeness in a stock library.

Our first tip is to shoot your subjects in the back! If they're not facing you, that gets round the need to get a form signed. If you do have to disguise faces then Photoshop has all the tools and tricks you need to reduce or eliminate the need for a model release form. If you photograph a friend on location you'll be able to get their signature, but the background could be packed full of people.

To disguise the crowd use a feathered Lasso tool to select your main subject. Select>Inverse the selection so that the background crowd is selected. You can go to Filter>Blur>Gaussian Blur to soften the faces in the crowd. This creates the shallow depth of field effect you'd get if you shot your subject using a wide aperture (f/5.6, for example). The subject would be in focus and the background and foreground elements would be blurred.

Another way to hide faces that you don't have permission to use is to use objects such as helmets or sunglasses to disguise them. In our example shot the foreground motorcycle rider's face was visible. We used the Freehand Lasso tool to select his face to isolate it.

Transplant face-hiding features from one figure to another to hide the identity of people in your stock photos

Tip

To fine-tune the position of a layer's contents, try using the arrow keys. You can shunt pixels up, down, left or right by tapping the appropriate arrow. By default each tap will move the layer's content by one pixel. To move content in larger increments, hold down Shift. This makes it shift position by ten pixels.

All a blur

Hide specific details

If you have a shot featuring personal information, logos or other details that you'd rather not reveal, remove it quickly and effectively using the Blur tool. For a more powerful blur effect increase the Strength to 100% in the Options bar. To blur multiple layers in a single stroke, tick the Sample All Layers option. Because the Blur tool is brush-based, you can use the Brush Preset Picker to create a soft-edged brush to blend the blurred pixels with their sharper neighbours. Feel free to let the Smudge tool join in to obscure unwanted pixels.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS Tool shortcuts

	PC	Mac
Rectangular Marquee tool	M	M
Elliptical Marquee tool	M	M
Move tool	V	V
Lasso tool	L	L

Then we grabbed the Clone Stamp tool and sampled the face of the masked rider in the background. We were able to transplant the mask and goggles of the rear rider over the main subject's face, rendering him anonymous. Professionals like police and firemen often wear face-concealing helmets, so you can easily transplant headgear from one figure to another to hide their face.

Straighten up your act

Q **Occasionally I find that the horizons in my photographs are tilted. To straighten them out I unlock the layer and use the Transform tool to rotate the shot. I usually then have to crop it a little to hide the transparent edges that appear. Is there a quicker way of straightening out a tilted horizon?**
Suzanne Greggs

A Photoshop offers a variety of ways to straighten up horizons without needing to touch the Transform tool. If you're using CS or CS2 you can use an often-neglected tool to straighten your shots.

Open a shot with a tilted horizon. Go to the Eyedropper tool's compartment of the toolbox and hold down the mouse to see the other tools that lurk there – you'll see the lesser-spotted Measure tool. An alternative way to access the Measure tool is to press Shift+I to cycle through the tools in that compartment. For a clue to how the Measure tool works, go to Window>Info. The Info palette will appear. Click and drag the Measure tool to follow a tilted horizontal line in your image. Look in the Info palette and you'll see an angle value has appeared. In our Big Ben example the angle that the Measure tool drew was -12.3˚.

The Rotate Canvas dialog will automatically add any negative value angle as a positive value in the Angle field

Once you've drawn a tilted line, go to Image>Rotate Canvas>Arbitrary. A new Rotate Canvas dialog box will open. You'll notice that the -12.3 angle drawn by the Measure tool has automatically been added to the field in the dialog box as a positive value of 12.3. Simply click OK, and Photoshop will rotate the shot to make the tilted horizontal lines run parallel with the bottom edge of the frame. You will still need to crop the edge of the shot in order

Delicious droplets

Batch edit your shots

In this issue's 'border creating' walkthrough on page 76, we show you how to turn all the steps required for creating a white border into an action. You are easily able to apply an action to a whole pile of files in one go by turning it into a droplet! Start off by going to the Automate>Create Droplet menu. You can then select the relevant action from the Action drop-down menu. Click Choose in order to select a destination for your droplet (the desktop would be a sensible location for this). Once you have created your droplet, simply drag your closed files onto it and it will run the action and then save the edited files into whatever folder you have specified.

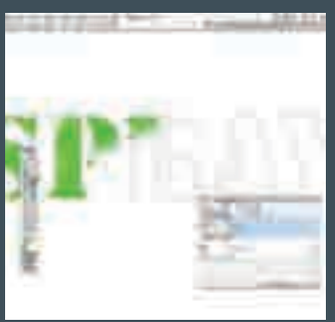
GRAFFITI STENCIL

Mimic a popular street art style

Q I'd like to create the effect of a can of spray paint being sprayed onto a wall using a stencil, so I can fake my own digital graffiti to create a flyer for a band. How do I do this in Photoshop? (I'm using CS.)
Maggie Rochester

A **A stencil is a sheet of paper or card that has a design cut into it. The holes in the stencil enable you to quickly and accurately spray text or a logo onto a wall. This is a handy tool for street artists who want to spread a signature or message that looks consistent (plus it stops hanging around and being nabbed for criminal damage…).**

01 Marvellous mask Select the Horizontal Type Mask tool (hold down the mouse over the Horizontal Type tool to get a pop-up of tools in that section). Pick a suitable font, such as Stencil. Type your text. Areas outside the mask will turn red, leaving your text clear.



02 Let us spray Select the Brush tool (B). Set Mode to Dissolve to mimic dots of paint. The red mask will vanish to be replaced by the 'marching ants' marquee in the shape of the text. Pick a foreground colour for the text. Click the Create a New Layer icon. Start spraying!

03 Bit of a drip Sometimes the stencil lifts from the wall, creating a softer letter. In Select>Feather, set a value of 3 to soften the stencil and give a realistic edge to the lettering. Change the brush mode to Normal to give a stronger spread of 'paint'. Use the Smudge tool to fake a few drips!

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS Tool shortcuts

	PC	Mac
Polygonal Lasso tool	L	L
Magnetic Lasso tool	L	L
Magic Wand tool	W	W
Crop tool	C	C

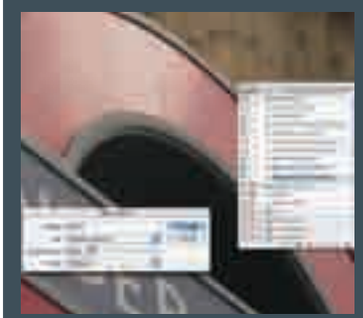
YOU'VE BEEN FRAMED

Create a border in seconds

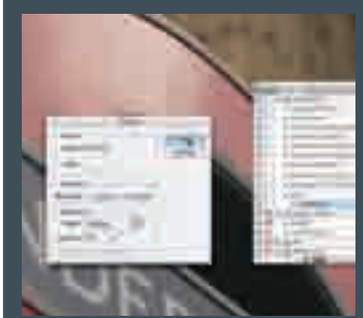
Q I want to give my shots a slight retro look by adding a border to them. Is there a quick and easy way to do this to a group of images?

Michael Pendleton

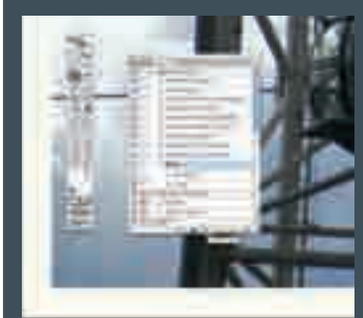
A In days of old you would crop a printed shot so that it had a white border. This was in order to protect the edges of the image from wear and tear. Digital pictures, however, are lucky if they ever see life as a handheld print – but we can easily create a border using techniques which can be stored as an action.



01 Action stations Go to Window and open the Actions palette. Click the Create New Action icon at the bottom of the palette. Label it 'Border' and click Record. Go to Select> All. The 'marching ants' selection marquee will appear around the edge of your shot.



02 Create a border Go to Edit> Stroke. In the Stroke dialog type in a value of 100 pixels. Click the colour icon, choose a colour for your border and hit OK. A border will appear around the edge of the shot. Click the Stop button in the Actions palette to complete the action.



03 Another border To apply a border to another shot, open the source file. Select the Border action in the Actions palette and click the Play button. Photoshop will select edges of the shot and stroke the inside of the selection with white to create an instant border.

to remove transparent edges that are created by the rotation.

If you're a CS2 user you'll be glad to know there's a handy Straighten tool embedded in a filter interface. Go to Filter>Distort>Lens Correction. Select the Straighten tool from the top left, and click and drag with the mouse to follow a tilted line. The Straighten tool will automatically rotate the shot in order to make the horizontal lines perpendicular with the edge of the frame. You can re-apply the Straighten tool several times to fine-tune the adjustment. You still need to crop or scale up the image to lose the transparent edges created by the transformation. If you're a Camera RAW fan you'll find a Straighten tool in the CS2 and Elements 4.0 version of Adobe Camera Raw Editor.

Ironically, one of the quickest ways to straighten tilted horizontal or vertical lines is in Photoshop Elements 4.0. The Straighten tool is easily accessible from the main toolbar (and is also found in the Quick Fix interface). Like the Measure tool and the CS2 Straighten tool, you click and drag the Elements Straighten tool to follow a tilted line in the image. It will automatically straighten the image and crop it at the same time – the little show off!

We'll pop back to CS2 for a final word on the topic of straightening tilted horizons or slanting verticals. Hidden in the menus is a filter that will straighten your shot and crop it for you. You don't need to draw a single line! Surprisingly, this filter isn't located in the Filter menu. Go to File>Automate>Crop and Straighten. Photoshop's magic pixies will cast their eye over your shot and automatically crop and straighten it for you. You may find that several mini files are created during this process, because Photoshop treats sections of your shot as potential photos. We fed the Automate filter our dramatically tilted version of Big Ben and it managed to produce a straightened and cropped version.

Calendar girl

Q **I'd like to create a calendar for my friend's Christmas present. Is there anywhere I can get hold of calendar templates from the web, as I can't be bothered drawing boxes with the Line tool and typing in dates?**

Anne Smith

A If you're using Photoshop Elements you're in luck, Anne (though we'll also provide a solution for CS users at the end of this answer). Elements 4.0 has a calendar creation option in its Creation setup menu.

Open the Elements Organizer and click on the Create button at the top of the interface. This will open the Creation Setup window. There are two calendar-related options here. The Calendar Pages option enables you to design pages that you can print off at home. The Bound Calendar option enables you to create a calendar and then have it bound and printed by Adobe Photoshop Services. This

Living on the edge

Find layer content more easily

Sometimes you'll end up with layers that only contain a small number of pixels (like a brush stoke or some cloned pixels, for example). It can be quite hard to locate and edit these pixels if a larger transparent background surrounds them. A quick and effective way to locate the pixels on any layer is to go to View> Show>Layer Edges. This will surround all of a selected layer's content with a blue bounding box, making it easy to spot and edit content. The white brush strokes in our screengrab are on separate layers.

KEYBOARD SHORTCUTS Tool shortcuts

	PC	Mac
Slice tool	K	K
Slice Select tool	K	K
Spot Healing Brush tool	J	J
Healing Brush tool	J	J

Elements 4.0 gives you a choice of designing a calendar to print at home or having it bound and printed by Adobe

links you to an American site, but as the dollar is weaker than the pound it's not as expensive as it first seems, even with airmail charges.

To design your calendar for home printing, click on Calendar Pages. Now click OK. You can then browse through a list of templates to find a suitable design for your source images. There are handy generic themes like Travel and Traditional. Once you've chosen a theme, click Next Step. This will allow you to click the Add Photos button to choose shots for each day of the month. Make sure you add 13 shots, so that you have an image on your calendar's title page. Click Next Step to fine-tune the size and position of the image on each page. Use the View Page drop-down menu to access and edit individual months.

When you've finished editing your calendar, give it a name and save it. You can then convert it to a PDF (so that you can take it to a commercial printer), email it or print it out on your home printer.

CS2 users don't have access to a cool calendar template, but there are online services that will let you place your edited images into a calendar template and then they'll print out the calendar for you. Surf on over to **www.Kodakgallery.co.uk**. Once you've signed in you can create a calendar online by uploading your shots to the Kodak EasyShare Gallery. The calendar templates are much more attractive than the Elements versions, and you can have several shots for each month instead of being limited to just one. They will also bind the calendar for you.

History lesson

Q **I can't seem to perform multiple undos in CS2. It only lets me undo the most recent command or brush stroke. Is there a preference setting that will let me jump back through my last few edits?**
Martin Bosun

A The great thing about Photoshop is the fact that you can undo mistakes. This gives you the freedom to experiment with different techniques without the fear of losing your original source image.

The Control/Command+Z keyboard shortcut will be second nature to most of us, as it immediately lets us undo our last action. In CS and CS2 the Control+Z keyboard shortcut undoes the last edit. If you press it again it will redo the edit. In Elements you can step back through multiple edits each time you use the Control/Command+Z shortcut. Elements is then stepping back through each event in the history of the document. To step back through the history of a CS2 document, you have to press Control/Command+Alt/Option+Z.

Unlike Elements, CS2 can display all the edits you've performed in the History palette (Window>History). This enables you to quickly jump back in time to an earlier stage in your edit by clicking to the left of a specific history state.

Jump back in time to an earlier edit with one click of the mouse button, thanks to the History palette

Book Resources

Although Photoshop can work wonders with photographs, it's always preferable to get things right in the first place. We've found an excellent book that reveals how to do exactly that. *An Illustrated A to Z of Digital Photography, People and Portraits* walks you through everything you need to become a better photographer. It's written by Nigel Atherton and Steve Crabb and is published by AVA Publishing for £19.95. Read our full review next issue.

Stay smart

Preserve your original image

When you scale down an image and transform it, you lose the original information that made up the image. If you then decide to enlarge it to its former size, Photoshop will have to make up additional pixels to create the larger version. This can lead to fuzzy-looking pixels. Before scaling down a layer in CS2, go to Layer>Smart Objects>Group into New Smart Object. This will save the layer's untransformed data in a separate file so that Photoshop can refer to it when you scale the image back up and preserve image quality.

Text tweaking

Resize text quickly

You often need to experiment with font size in text. One way is to click the Font Size field in the Options bar, then use the scroll wheel to enlarge or shrink it. If you don't have one, click to the left of the Font Size field and a hand icon will appear. Drag left to shrink text, right to enlarge. For a precise size enter a point value.

PHOTO FIX

Send in your troublesome images for us to fix…

Send your problematic photos on a CD to:

Photo Fix, *Photoshop Creative*, Imagine Publishing, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EZ

Unfortunately we cannot return CDs

Magical selections

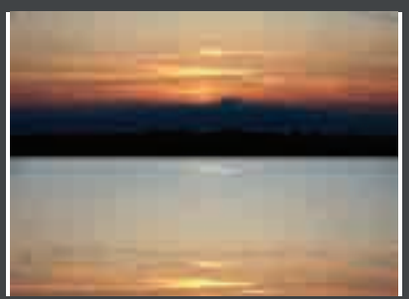
The Magic Wand is an indispensable tool in Photoshop and well worth learning how to use to its full potential

For this image we'll not actually show a technique, but give an overview of the Magic Wand tool and explain how it works. A sunset is the perfect image to illustrate how to use the tool properly, as it's made up of many colours that aren't separated by lines but blended together. The power of the Magic Wand lies in the options and settings you choose in the top Options bar once the tool is selected. The pixels selected can be determined by altering the Tolerance setting and checking the Contiguous option. As well as using the Tolerance setting to adjust the selection in the image, you can also do this via Select> Grow, which results in a larger range of pixels being selected. Read on and learn…

SUPER SELECTIONS

Learn how to use your Magic Wand like a wizard...

01 Examine your tool's options We opened our sunset sky photograph. Choose the Zoom tool, and then in the top Options bar click Fit Screen to make it nice and big. Select the Magic Wand tool from the toolbar. It will be set to a default Tolerance of 32. We clicked in the middle of the blue to create this selection.



02 Test your Tolerance The Tolerance value you enter determines the colours that are selected when you click in your image. If it's set to 32 then wherever you click, pixels that are within a range of 32 greyscale values of this pixel will be selected. The screenshots above show the difference between a Tolerance of 50 (bottom) and 100 (top) when clicking in the same blue space in the middle.

03 Customise the way the Wand works If you check Sample All Layers, pixels of the range you entered into the Tolerance box are selected from all the layers. If you uncheck Contiguous, instead of pixels within the Tolerance range touching the one you click being selected, they will be selected from the whole image – which can be seen in the above screenshots.

Tool School

Adjusting your selection

If you want to add or subtract from your selection using the Magic Wand tool, use the buttons at the top left of the top Options bar when the tool is selected. You also have the option to intersect your selection in this area.

creative reviews

There's a plethora of extra items that help extend your Photoshop creativity. This issue we look at a scanner, a plug-in and some unusual paper…

Hardware reviews

Epson V350 Photo 82

Other reviews

Filter Forge 84
Window Cling 85

Book reviews

The Essential Color Manual for Photographers 86
Photoshop Restoration and Retouching 87
Digital Photography Before and After Makeovers 87
ePHOTOzine Guide to Great Photography 87

Epson V350 Photo

"Enjoy clear and crisp digital input with this quality scanner from Epson"

HARDWARE

Epson V350 Photo

It's official –we have fallen in love with the Epson V350 Photo scanner!

info

COMPANY
Epson

WEB
www.epson.co.uk

PRICE (SRP)
£99.99

OPERATING SYSTEMS
Mac and PC

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
Windows 98SE, 2000, Me or XP

Mac OS X 10.2.8 or later

Epson's latest addition to its scanner family is a good all-round performer. It not only produces scans of a fantastic quality but boasts an impressive list of innovative features to enhance the way you scan a range of different documents such as books, film and slides.

One of the most outstanding features of the V350 is its auto-feed film loader, which enables you to scan negative and positive strips of film. Pressing on the hatch in the scanner lid makes it spring open, ready for you to place your film into the feeder. All that's left to do then is press the button for the unit to feed it in and scan.

The Epson V350 can scan up to six frames of 35mm film at once, making it the ideal solution if you have a large collection of negatives that you want to scan quickly and easily. Alternatively, if you feel more comfortable with the familiar type of film holder and transparency adaptor, you can opt to use that instead.

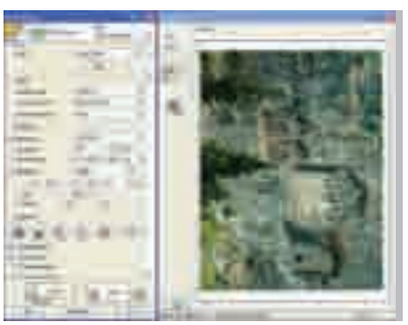
The high-rise lid on the unit is another of its selling points, as it can be lifted to an angle of 90° or 180°. This allows you to scan a multitude of different types of documents that are both flat and three-dimensional – no more struggling to fit thick magazines and books into the scanner. With the lid closed you can scan documents up to 25mm in width, and with the lid open they can measure up to an inch in width.

TAKE A PEEK INSIDE THE V350

What makes it so special?

A simple, stylish and effective scanning solution…

Easy film feeder
The V350 has developed the traditional way of scanning film using a transparency holder and has a loader that you feed film into from the top.



Amazing quality
Featuring Epson's Matrix CCD technology, 4800 x 9600dpi scanning capability and 3.2 dynamic range, no wonder scans are of such high quality.

Flexible lid
The lid can be opened to either 90° or a fully open 180°. Its extendable hinge means thicker documents can be scanned easily.

The design of the unit is also very appealing – considering its lid is capable of being lifted back completely so it's lying flat, the scanner is surprisingly slim. Its shiny silver finish also makes the unit look very stylish and modern displayed on your work surface.

Scan quality is extremely crisp with a high clarity of detail. This is all thanks to Epson's Matrix CCD technology, the scanner's 4800 x 9600dpi scanning capability and 3.2 dynamic range. These impressive specifications mean you can produce excellent enlargements of your scanned images that have a high level of detail and accuracy retained, resembling scans of a professional quality. The V350 really is fantastic value for money, because with a resolution such as this you would expect a much higher price tag.

The software included with the unit, Epson Scan and Epson Creativity Suite, is easy to use. Epson Scan also has the option of different modes – Full Auto, Home or Professional – so gives more advanced users a higher level of control over their scans. And the Epson Easy Photo Fix Technology enables you to easily improve photos, with automatic colour restoration for faded photographs.

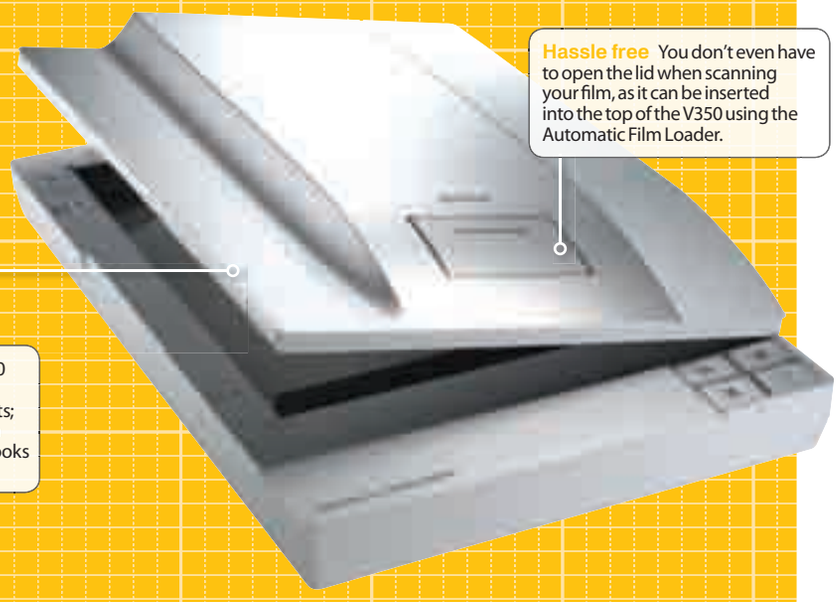
Using the new Digital Dust Correction technology, the unit also detects and then removes dust particles from photographs. The most important thing about this process is that it doesn't result in deterioration of the quality of the entire image, as it assesses the image and then only removes dust in the areas where it's most apparent. If you have any underexposed images, the scanner's backlight correction feature will automatically enhance and correct brightness, sharpness, colour saturation and balance.

Scanning is made very convenient using the V350's high-speed USB 2.0 interface, meaning data transfer is even quicker. The handy four large buttons on the front of the unit speed things up even more – at the touch of a button you can carry out scanning or create a copy to attach to an email or create a PDF. A common mistake with the design of scanners that feature buttons such as these is that they are placed wrongly on the unit and are easily pressed by mistake. The V350 does not suffer from this problem. This means that if you need a scan immediately you don't have to worry about opening up the software to carry it out. This is perfect if you want to quickly scan a photo and attach it to an email with minimum hassle.

With such an excellent array of features, the V350 is a great choice for those wanting high quality scans at an affordable price.

GET THE RESULTS YOU WANT

The Epson V350 Photo offers a huge range of scanning features and enables you to achieve exactly the results you're looking for…



Hassle free You don't even have to open the lid when scanning your film, as it can be inserted into the top of the V350 using the Automatic Film Loader.

Lifting the lid The V350 is not only suitable for scanning slim documents; it can also cope well with larger magazines and books due to its high-rise lid.

"ONE OF THE MOST OUTSTANDING FEATURES IS THE AUTO-FEED FILM LOADER, LETTING YOU SCAN NEGATIVE AND POSITIVE STRIPS OF FILM"

At the touch of a button
The four buttons on the front let you scan, copy, attach the scan to an email and create a PDF of the image without having to open any apps.

Restoration capabilities
One of many restoration features on the V350, Epson's Digital Dust Correction technology detects as well as removes dust on images.

Stylish design
The V350 not only scores highly on performance, it's also slimline, shiny and modern. The perfect addition to your digital imaging and design setup.

PROS

- Flexible lid that enables scanning of larger documents
- Automatic Film Loader enables you to feed film quickly into the scanner
- Impressive quality of scans due to Matrix CCD technology and 4800 x 9600dpi resolution
- Additional software such as Epson Creativity Suite and Epson Scan (featuring Epson Easy Photo Fix Technology)

CONS

- None that we can see!

VERDICT

9.5

Affordable price, unique features make it perfect for the home user

PRODUCTS

info

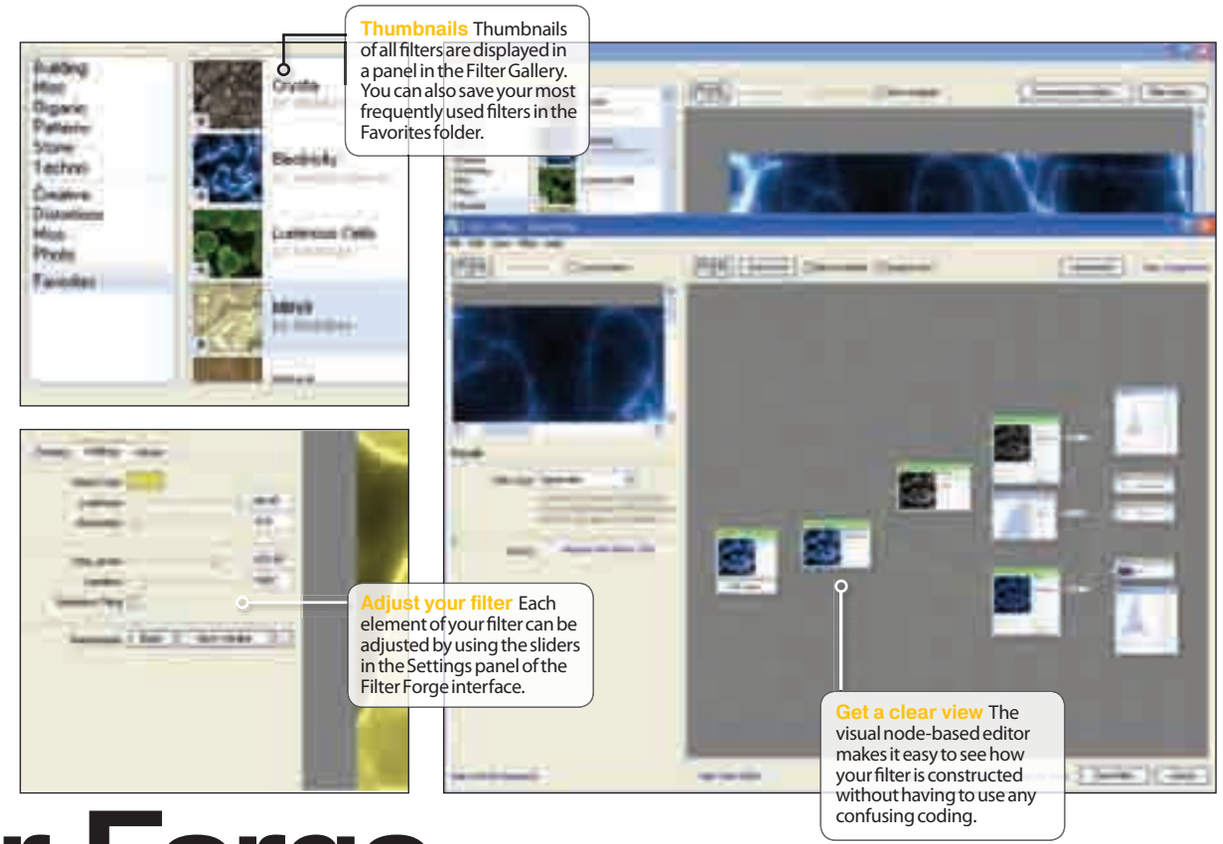
COMPANY
Filter Forge

WEB
www.filterforge.com

PRICE
Only a beta version is available at the moment

OPERATING SYSTEMS
PC (but a Mac version is planned)

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
Windows 2000/ XP



Thumbnails Thumbnails of all filters are displayed in a panel in the Filter Gallery. You can also save your most frequently used filters in the Favorites folder.

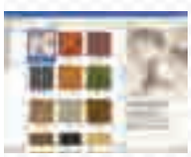
Adjust your filter Each element of your filter can be adjusted by using the sliders in the Settings panel of the Filter Forge interface.

Get a clear view The visual node-based editor makes it easy to see how your filter is constructed without having to use any confusing coding.

Filter Forge

Make sure that you get the perfect filter by making it yourself from scratch with this unique plug-in…

DETAILS
Take a closer look...



You can add many components to your filter, eg channels and noise, making it totally personalised and unique.

Users of the beta can submit their filters to be included in the Filter Forge library – which currently has hundreds.

The Filter Forge interface includes features such as a Randomizer which generates a new result each time it's clicked.

Filter Forge allows you a high level of control but also makes the process easy, including elements such as a Favorites folder.

Filter Forge is a revolutionary Photoshop plug-in enabling you to create your own filters and generate unique seamless textures, impressive visual effects, patterns and backgrounds. The visual node-based filter editor lets you see the effect of each element as it's changed, and your filter creations are enhanced by features such as HDRI lighting and bump maps. All filters created are editable, support 16-bit and 32-bit mode images and are resolution-independent so can be applied to any size of image.

Some knowledge of making textures helps but isn't essential, since all is explained in the online help. Although the plug-in is easy to use, 216,000 lines of code and five programming languages have gone into building it. Filter Forge can be used as a Photoshop plug-in or standalone app.

Its main strength is the amount of control you have over the filter creation. It has taken the pain out of building filters, so you don't have to be a programming genius due to the highly visual interface and simplified method. It's easy to add controls and effects to your plug-in such as gradients, noise and patterns by dragging them to the workspace. The option to edit existing filters from the Filter library is also a good way to learn to use the controls.

Filters are built by connecting components to a network, and the combined effects are seen in the Results window. From using Photoshop, you'll be familiar with many of the features that can be added to a filter, eg blurs and gradients. The methods of controlling them will also be recognisable and the multi-core processors give a quick rendering time.

The Filter Forge site includes a selection of filters in the free Filter library that's been created by visitors. If you submit popular filters to the library you receive a free full copy of the plug-in.

At the moment Filter Forge is not available to buy, but the commercial version is expected to cost between $200 and $300. Check out the beta demo on this issue's disc!

PROS

- Powerful capability to create your own filters
- Free gallery of other users' filters

CONS

- No Mac version (but it is being planned)
- Only a beta version at present

VERDICT

8.9

Offers ease of use and the ability to create your own filters from scratch

PRODUCTS

Your choice Crafty Computer Paper has a wide range of printing materials, such as hand-made Japanese washi paper, magic inkjet decal for ceramics and special effect fuzzy inkjet paper.

Show off your work
Fun and simple to print onto, Window Cling paper provides a unique way to display designs around your home.

info

COMPANY
Crafty Computer Paper

WEB
www.craftycomputerpaper.co.uk

PRICE
£7.50 for a pack of 5 A4

OPERATING SYSTEMS
PC and Mac

MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS
Inkjet printer

Window Cling paper

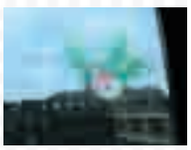
Let your creativity go wild with Crafty Computer Paper's innovative printing material…

DETAILS
Take a closer look...

Check which way your printer's paper is loaded in, as the image needs to be printed onto the see-through side of the sheet.

As Window Cling will be stuck to the window and display the opposite, you need to reverse the image and text before printing.

Once your design is on the sheet, it's easy to get it onto the window – just peel off the backing and place it on the glass!



As with any window sticker, you can easily peel it off the surface ready to be repositioned in another place.

Crafty Computer Paper is a great site to visit for extending your creative printing possibilities, and one of its most interesting products is its Window Cling paper.

As you'd guess from its name, this paper allows you to apply designs to windows. Simply print out your design using an inkjet printer and then peel off the backing sheet so you're left with the clear sheet. One side of the sheet adheres to the glass surface when it's placed against it, but it can also be peeled away without leaving any marks.

Window Cling is perfect for creating decorative designs for festive occasions, such as the one just around the corner!

One important thing to remember, especially if you're printing an image accompanied by text, is to reverse it. This can easily be done in Photoshop and means your work will print out as you designed it. We found that brighter colours show up better when printed onto the clear sheet and placed on a window, especially when the light shines through them. We tested the clear sheets, and therefore couldn't print any designs incorporating white. However, if you did want to print an image with white in it, Crafty Computer Paper also sells white sheets of Window Cling. You would then need to cut around your design closely, because the backing isn't transparent.

The other great thing about the Window Cling paper is that it's waterproof and not easily damaged. The quality of the printed image is quite impressive but lighter colours don't pick up as well, so avoid very subtle designs when printing onto the clear sheets. It's worth compensating for this and making your image slightly bolder and darker. One problem we did find (but it's easily avoidable) is that fingerprints show up once it's printed, so try not to handle the sheet much before putting it in the printer.

At £7.50 for a pack of five sheets, Window Cling is fun, easy to use and affordable, as you can print multiple designs on one sheet.

PROS
- Easy to use (just remember to reverse the design before printing)
- Both clear and white sheets available
- Paper is waterproof
- Easily removed from window

CONS
- Subtle and pale colours do not pick up very well

VERDICT

8.5

An innovative, exciting new way to print out and present your work

BOOKS

The Essential Color Manual for Photographers

Whether you're a beginner or an expert, this book has something for you

Colour plays an essential part in photography, so having a proper understanding of how to use it perfectly is important.

This nicely presented, hardback guide is user-friendly and suitable for everyone. It begins with the basics of what colour is, incorporating vital diagrams to explain how different colours combine. If you already have a grasp of principles like this, there are plenty of advanced topics later on in the book, such as how colour is captured, the importance of quality of light and using colour enhancement filters. Essential topics such as matching your monitor to your printer and device profiling are not skimmed over either.

The diagram features many large vibrant images and diagrams, which makes sense considering the theme of the book! Different types of images are also covered in depth, such as achieving the right skin tone in portrait images and capturing seasonal colour in landscape shots. Of course, Photoshop also features heavily, with topics covered including Channels, Color Balancing, Levels, Curves and Variations.

info

AUTHOR
Chris Rutter

PRICE
£25.00

PUBLISHER
Rotovision

ISBN
2-940378-11-8

Beautifully bold images You can marvel at the amazing photography and learn how to put colour to great use in your own shots.

Achieving the perfect balance The great strength of this guide is its ideal combination of text and impressive images, making it both informative and attractive.

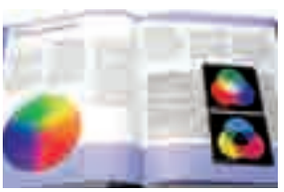
COLOUR YOUR WORLD

Find out how this book will help you make the best use of colour

Technical information If you're interested in extra equipment to improve your photos, eg colour filters, it's all explained in this guide.

Incorporating Photoshop Photoshop's tools and filters play a large part, as they can enhance an image's colour so dramatically.

Photographers' profiles Some vibrant and expressive photographers' work is displayed in the last section of the manual.



Understand the basics Get to grips with the fundamental theories of colour and the results of different colour combinations.

Step by step In addition to coverage of the various areas of colour, there are tutorials on how to create some stunning effects.

NOTES | LET US KNOW IF THERE'S A TYPE OF PHOTOSHOP BOOK YOU'D LIKE US TO REVIEW – JUST EMAIL PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK

Photoshop Restoration & Retouching (3rd edition)

Discover how to give old photos a whole new lease of life and retouch modern portrait shots

info

AUTHOR
Katrin Eismann

PRICE
£35.99

PUBLISHER
New Riders

ISBN
0-321-31627-4

If our restoration feature last month got you in the retouching mood, this book makes ideal reading and covers every aspect in detail. The processes used are incredible, as most of the photos featured appear to be beyond rescuing. Common problems like improving dark images are covered, right through to obscure tasks such as removing curvature and keystoning. Retouching modern portrait shots and fashion photography are also featured. Even if you think you know all there is to know about restoration, you'll learn some new tricks. Take a look at this month's interview where we talk to author Katrin Eismann.

Miracle makeovers This marvellous book proves that almost any damaged photograph can be saved with a little effort in Photoshop.

OPERATION RESCUE

A little know-how can make all the difference

Perfect portrait shots
Apart from restoring old photos, the guide covers portrait retouching and enhancing facial features.

Creative refinements
Katrin Eismann shows you how to be adventurous when you're polishing up those images.

Tricks of the trade
The book is bursting with techniques collated from years of photographic restoration experience.

Detailed explanation
Diagrams, screenshots and images are essential when covering a subject such as this.

info

AUTHOR
Julie Adair King

PRICE
£19.99

PUBLISHER
Wiley

ISBN
0-471-76116-8

Digital Photography Before & After Makeovers

Quick fixes plus tutorials on complex procedures make for a great in-depth guide

This book displays examples of common errors people make when taking a digital photo, and shows how they can be rectified to result in a great shot. Each problem is accompanied by a clear step-by-step tutorial with supporting diagrams and screenshots. There's a nice balance between showing how the shot could have been made better using different photographical techniques or adjusting your camera settings, and demonstrating how images you can't retake can be enhanced afterwards using Photoshop's tools and filters. The 'Author Confidential' sections break up the step-by-steps and give supporting background info, tips and handy techniques. At first glance you may think the book contains just very quick tutorials to solve your photographic problems, but it also features some more complex procedures, such as blurring a busy background in your photo editor. This is therefore not only a book full of quick fixes but also an in-depth guide.

ePHOTOzine Guide to Great Photography

The respected online photography magazine brings its knowledge to a glossy book format

info

AUTHOR
Peter Bargh

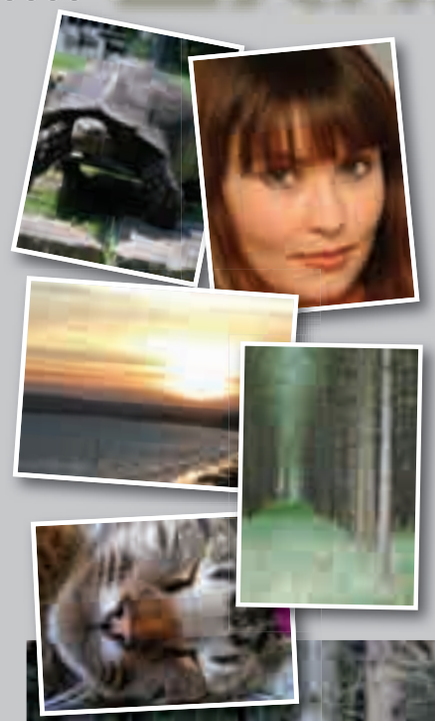
PRICE
£25.00

PUBLISHER
Magezine

ISBN
0-9551760-0-X

***PHOTOzine* is one of the most prominent online photography magazines and photographic communities on the web.** Many visitors were very excited when they heard this guide was being produced, and they won't be disappointed. The book begins with a short history of *ePHOTOzine,* then a beginner's overview of photography that explains the essential terms and equipment. The book is then divided into sub-categories within the main areas of photography. Each area begins with a prominent and striking opening shot and a chunk of explanatory text. The rest of the guide is comprised of thousands of images, shooting tips, portfolio sections and tips and techniques. As well as the traditional tricks of the trade used to capture perfect shots, the book also covers Photoshop techniques to enhance your images, making it essential reading for any photographer.

Exhibit



Sleeping cats, wandering tortoises, strange trees and glorious sunsets. It could only mean one thing – issue 14's Readers' Challenge!

For those of you new to *Photoshop Creative*, this is the section where we display the most imaginative entries to our regular Readers' Challenge.

And what is that, you may ask. Well, it's our monthly test of your creativity and Photoshop cunning. Each challenge has a set amount of pictures. It is up to you to create an image using at least one of those images. It can be on any topic you like and can be sent in any time you like. We just ask that you have fun doing it!

Issue 14 saw another motley collection of photos, but that doesn't seem to have phased you one iota. We received a postbag groaning under the weight of entries, all as interesting as each other. Some of you decided to make the trees home to strange and wonderful creatures, while others went for more illustrative and decorative effects. So a big well done to all who entered and don't feel bad if you're not featured – have a go with this issue's challenge!

Get your work featured

If you'd like to share your work with other readers, send your pictures in to us and you could be featured on these pages. Just pop your images onto a CD and send it to:

Exhibit, *Photoshop Creative*, Imagine Publishing, Richmond House, 33 Richmond Hill, Bournemouth, Dorset BH2 6EZ, UK

Alas, we can't return any CDs. If your entry is under 2MB, you can email it to **PCR@imagine-publishing.co.uk**

THE WINNER!

Andy Bishop

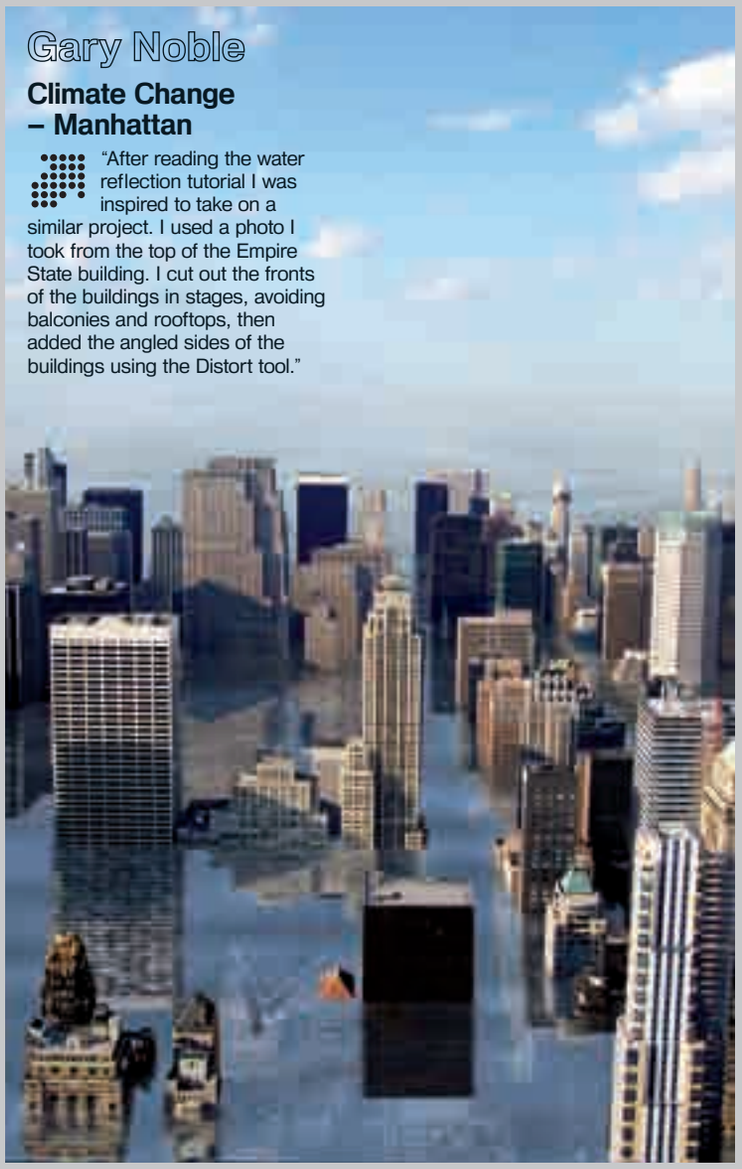
Wild Thing

"For this image I put the girl's eyes on the sleepy cat and then added the image to the woodland and used a layer mask to let the woodland come through."

Gary Noble

Climate Change – Manhattan

"After reading the water reflection tutorial I was inspired to take on a similar project. I used a photo I took from the top of the Empire State building. I cut out the fronts of the buildings in stages, avoiding balconies and rooftops, then added the angled sides of the buildings using the Distort tool."



Abigail Errington (top left)

Organiclife

"I took inspiration from some of the textured backgrounds that came with issue 14's CD. I built the image up using different techniques, including paint techniques in that issue."

Michael Tickle

MAG2

"This one is from the picture of the towers you provided. When I saw them, all I could see from them was two large guns as in Doom or Quake."

Exhibit

Turn to page 98 and enter this issue's Readers' Challenge

Colin Karpeta (right)

Fire 2

"Hello, I thought I'd send you my latest attempt at manipulating the CD pictures for the Readers' Challenge. I have used three of the images… although one may be hard to spot… and a couple of the downloaded brushes and a font. Again, this has been great fun to do."

Garry Stark (left)

Head in the Clouds

"I thought I would use this image as I found it probably more challenging than the others. Various bits of blending around her – and hey presto!"

Derek Russell (above)

Akita

"I was inspired by the forest image supplied on issue 14's magazine disc to pursue a Japanese manga style image by creating a pseudo anime movie poster."

Mehrdad Azadi (above)

The Last Survivors

"Thank you all for the great articles. I basically put whatever I learned from the magazine into this piece."

Iris Aleit (left)

Snowcat

"I had no time for doing anything for this – but now, I worked the whole evening and I love the work!"

Emma Goulder (above)

Woodland Fairies

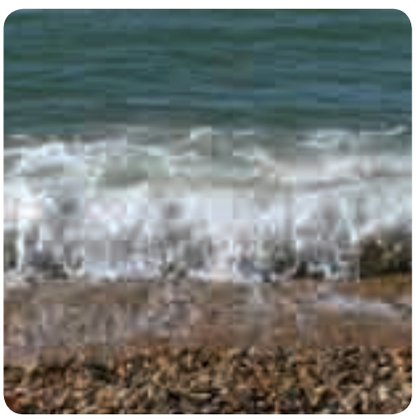
"When I first saw the woodlands, a fantasy theme came into my mind. I darkened the whole photo to give it a fantasy feel and added the person and then the butterflies, giving them an outer glow."

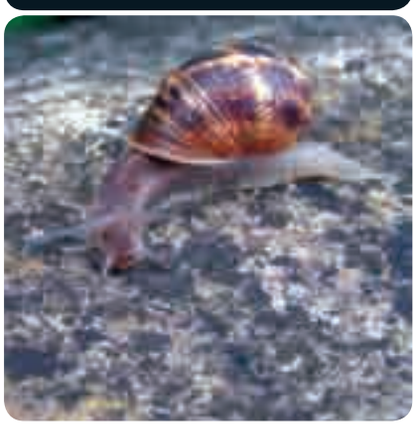
Matthew Stich (right)

Lizardstormsundarkred

"I wanted to create a picture that reminds me of death and renewal of the desert. I wanted the lizards to be symbolic of this cycle also, so it seemed fitting to have a circle pattern of dark and translucent ones."

Enter our challenge and see your work in the magazine!





HOW TO ENTER

Access the Readers' Challenge folder from the side panel on our CD and copy it to your desktop. Once you've completed your masterpiece, send it to us on a CD along with your name, address and a few words about your creation, to:

Readers' Challenge
Photoshop Creative
Imagine Publishing
Richmond House
33 Richmond Hill
Bournemouth
Dorset, UK
BH2 6EZ

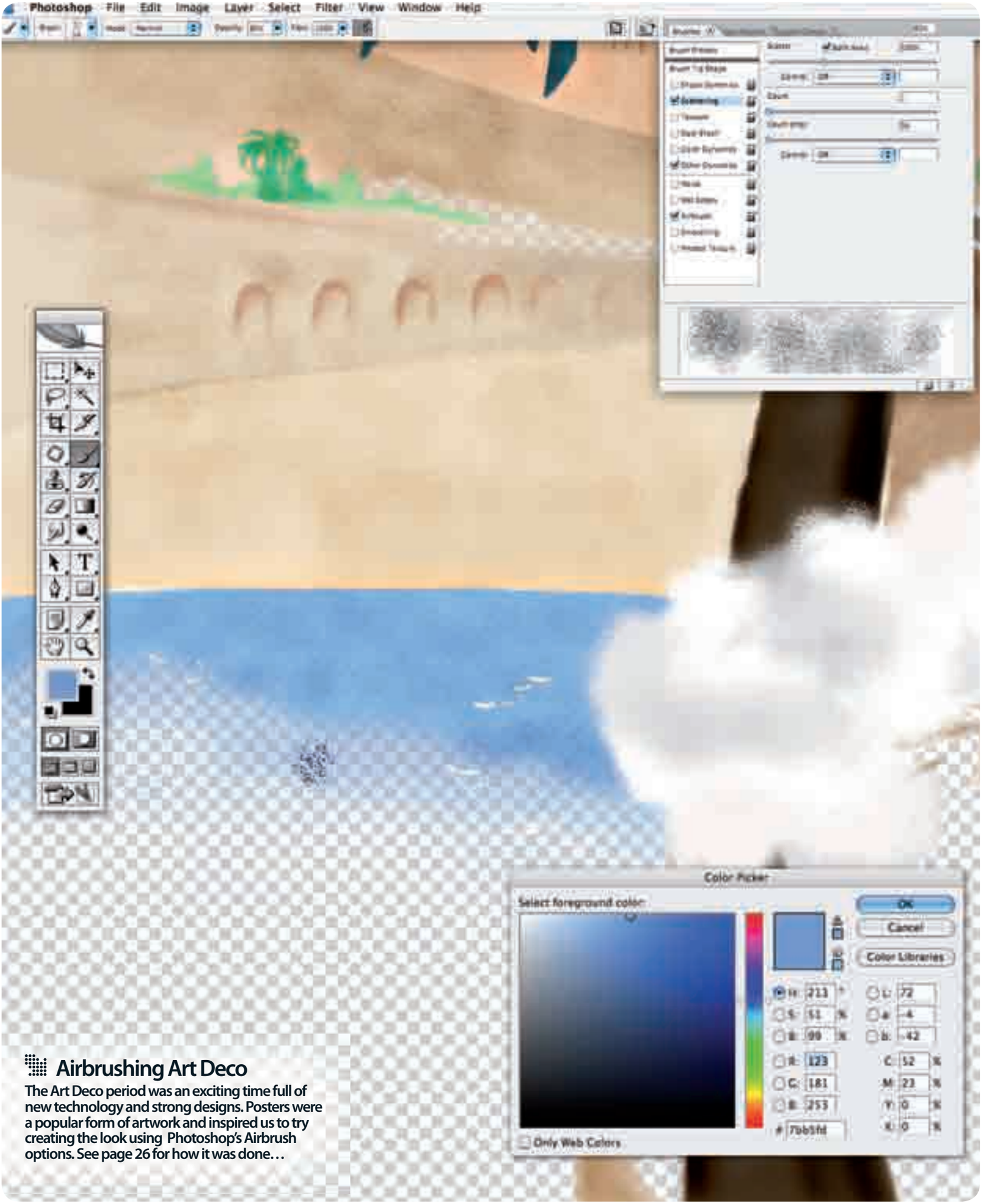
Readers' Challenge

Give your imagination cells a thorough workout with another set of photos and another Readers' Challenge!

There are many things that make working on this magazine a true pleasure, but one of the best has to be getting the entries to the Readers' Challenge. No matter how we try and test you with a random and frankly bewildering selection of images, you always manage to rise to the occasion and inundate us with entries. It's really interesting to see how you warp the images to suit your own purposes, and you often end up teaching us a few things!

As ever, we have a good range of photographs for this challenge. Use as many as you like, mix them up with your own photos, use techniques learnt in the magazine or concentrate on your favourite effects… We don't mind as long as you show us what you end up with!

NOTES | IF YOUR ENTRY IS UNDER 2MB, YOU CAN EMAIL IT TO US AT **PCR@IMAGINE-PUBLISHING.CO.UK**. UNFORTUNATELY WE CAN'T RETURN CDS



Airbrushing Art Deco

The Art Deco period was an exciting time full of new technology and strong designs. Posters were a popular form of artwork and inspired us to try creating the look using Photoshop's Airbrush options. See page 26 for how it was done…